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FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION

APRIL 1959
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by D. A. Jourdan

TEMPTRESS OF EDEN
A. Bertram Chandler

THE MOON IS NEW
David Osborne

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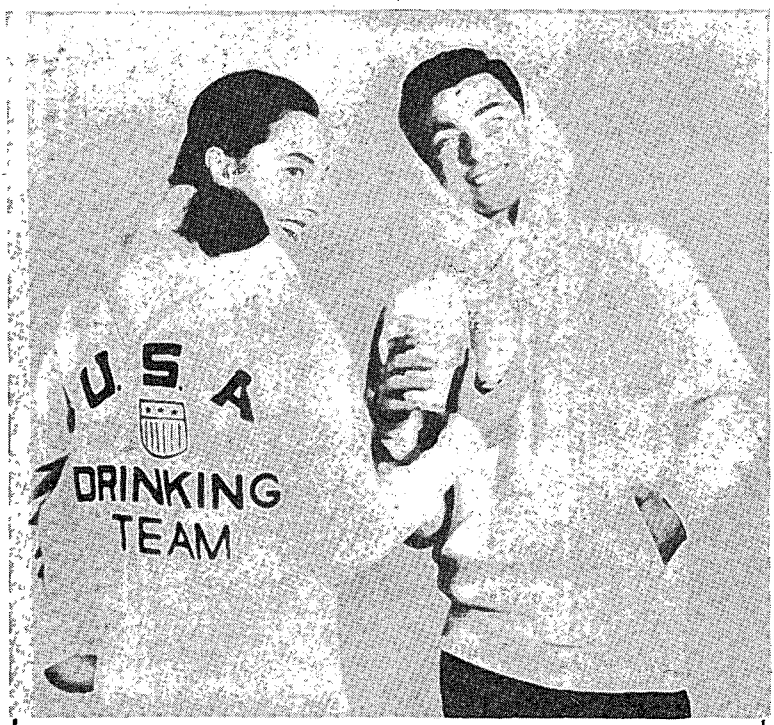

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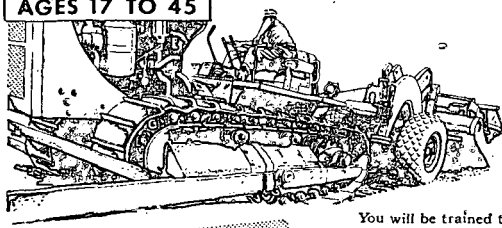

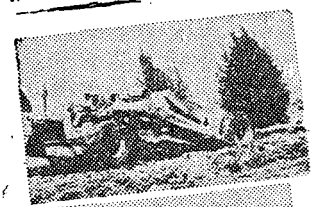

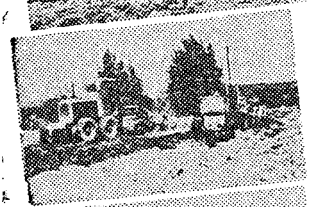

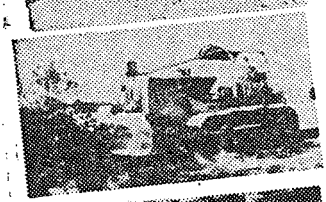

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FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION

No. 42
April,
1959
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Illustrations by Emsh and Orban

Editor: ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES DOROTHY B. SEADOR, Asso. Ed.

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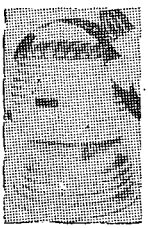

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TEMPTRESS OF EDEN

illustration by EMSH

by A. Bertram Chandler

Eelulie was lovely and eager to learn, and surely it would do no harm to give her and her people the gift of fire . . .

THE EDITOR told me, "I want you to go and get an interview with Captain Aspinall."

"But," I protested, "we ran an interview with him only six months ago."

"The public," said the Editor, "has a blessedly short memory. And we're short of material for our Sunday Supplement—just as we were half a year back. Do you think that I'd take up precious time with the meandering monologues of retired Space Captains otherwise? Anyhow, it'll all tie in nicely with the present shindy being raised in Congress."

"Which one?" I asked.

"The one about interference with the cultures of extra-Terran races. Get the old spacehound to give you *his* views on the subject. He's bound to have some."

"Too many, probably," I complained.

"Don't argue," said the Editor.

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Her name was Eelulie, and the liquid syllables seemed to describe the grace of her movements.

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"Oh, all right."

I COLLECTED my visual and sound recording apparatus, packed it into the office helicopter. I lifted from the flat roof, flew southwards over the city. Captain Aspinall's house was about ten miles beyond the city limits. You couldn't miss it; it had been designed to look just like one of the old-time rockets—needle-sharp nose, vaned landing gear and all. The old boy himself was out on the lawn in front of his house. He waved me in and down. He was walking toward the aircraft, hand outstretched in greeting, before the vanes had stopped rotating. His teeth, as he smiled, were very white against the leathery brown of his face; so were his hair and eyebrows.

"Mr. Brown?" he asked, as soon as I had the door open. "Your Editor called me, and told me you were coming."

I shook hands. "Yes, my name is Brown, Captain. I was out to see you about six months ago."

"Were you, now? I must apologize for my memory. It's clear enough about everything that happened when I was in Space, but it's just a little vague about recent events. Anyhow, come on in. Can I give you a hand with your gear?"

"No thank you, Captain. I can manage."

LOOKING—and feeling—like a walking Christmas tree, I followed him into the house. The elevator took us up to what would have been the Control Room of a real spaceship. It was spacious enough, and comfortably furnished. It was lined with bookshelves. There was an open book on one of the little tables.

"So you read, Captain?" I asked.

"Of course I read," he snorted. "You'll find precious few spacemen that don't. When you're out on the Long Haul, books are better than all the recordings ever made."

I eased my equipment to the floor. I picked up the book, and read: *"Of all the beasts which the Lord God had made, there was none that could match the serpent in cunning. It was he who said to the woman, 'What is this command*

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God has given you, not to eat the fruit of any tree in the garden?' To which the woman answered, 'We can eat the fruit of any tree in the garden except the tree in the middle of it; it is this God has forbidden us to eat or even to touch, on pain of death.' And the serpent said to her, 'What is this talk of death? God knows well that as soon as you eat this fruit your eyes will be opened, and you yourselves will be like gods, knowing good and evil.'..."

"So you read, too," said Aspinall sardonically.

"This is the first time that I've picked up a *book* for years," I confessed. "But tell me, Captain—this is off the record—are you a religious man? Space travel seems to affect different people different ways. Some become religious. Some become even more confirmed in agnosticism or atheism than they were before."

"I wasn't religious," said the old man. "It's only recently, within the last few months, that I've come to the realization that there's something in religion. Something? *Everything*, I mean. And this is not, I assure you, mere childish fear of the dark as one nears the end of one's allotted span. I'd be happier if the darkness, the long sleep, were all that I had to look forward to."

I LOOKED at my watch. "This is all very interesting, Captain, but I came here to record an interview. As a matter of fact, my Editor would like your views on the Anti-Interference Bill that's being debated by Congress at the present moment."

"I have views on the Bill," he snorted. "Strong views—so switch on your recorders and I'll give you your interview. And tell your Editor that if anything is cut I'll sue!"

"As you please, Captain," I told him.

I set up the automatic cameras to their best advantage, so that the Editor would have at least four different views of the Captain to choose from. One of them included my own profile, but past experience had taught me that such members of the public as tuned in to our broadcasted interviews knew me as only a disembodied voice. But I went on trying.

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I didn't bother with any introductory remarks—they would all be added in the studio.

I SAID, "What are your views on the Anti-Interference Bill, Captain Aspinall?"

"It is a good measure," he replied, "as far as it goes. It should go further. It should prohibit *all* contact between Earthmen and intelligent beings living in primitive cultures."

"But surely, Captain, that is going rather too far. You—or some Survey Service Captain like you—finds a race living in the forest without fire, without the wheel, without agriculture. It can only be for this race's own good if you give them just that one little nudge onwards and upwards. I'm not proposing that you give them firearms, or any other dangerous knowledge. . . ."

"It could be," said Captain Aspinall, "that even so much is dangerous. Perhaps a story—a true story—will illustrate my point best of all.

"It was many years ago, and I had just been appointed to my first command—a three man Scout attached to one of the big Survey Ships. We were, at the time, making a survey of the Andromeda section. I needn't bore you with an account of everything we found, it was all made available to the public on our return. All? Well, almost all.

"Anyhow, there I was in the little control room of my little Scout, monarch of all I surveyed, blasting out and clear from the big ship. I, as I've said, was Captain and, by virtue of a somewhat sketchy training in the field, Ethnologist. My Engineer was also the Bio-Chemist. My Navigator was in charge of Communications and was supposed to have a reasonable grasp of Physics, Geology and Zoology. We were, in fact, as fine a trio of brash puppies as were ever loosed upon a hitherto undiscovered planet.

"FROM STAR to star we wandered, from planet to planet, investigating, exploring, logging our findings and sending lengthy reports back to the mother ship by the psionic radio. Nobody to this day has discovered why the speed of

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light, and of ordinary radio waves, should be finite and that of thought waves should be, to all intents and purposes, infinite. It would almost seem that the Almighty intended that we should push out among the stars, and gave us faculties that would be of use in our voyagings. But...was it, is it, *His* intention? I'm an old man now, with my active life, most of it spent in Deep Space, behind me, and I wish I knew...

"And I'm afraid..."

"What of?" I asked abruptly.

"When you're my age, and look back," said the old man, "you'll feel the same. You'll remember occasions when an action of yours that could have brought only good in its train was not made, and other occasions when an action resulting in evil *was* made. You'll begin to wonder about the accounting to come."

"I hope I'm not treading on your religious corns," I told him, "but I'm an agnostic."

"So was I," said the Captain. He picked up the Bible from the table. "I thought that the Book was no more than the history of an obscure Semitic people—their history and their myths and legends. Genesis—merely an attempt by the priesthood, by Moses, to explain the origin of things. Exodus—the glamorized account of a large scale slave rebellion, led by a renegade priest... That's what I used to think.

"BUT AS I was saying, we wandered from world to world. Some we found capable of supporting life as we know it, but sterile. Some we found with atmospheres of chlorine or fluorine, with plants and animals evolved to live in what would be, to us, lethal conditions. On some worlds we found the ruins of cities, but of the city builders no trace. And then, at last, we found *the* world.

"We dropped down from the evening sky, feeling that the flame and the thunder of our rockets was an affront to the sunset glory. We drifted in to our landing in a broad clearing in the middle of a forest of steeple-like trees—a forest that, at first, looked like a huge spaceport berthing all the rockets in the Universe, that,

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after we had disembarked from our ship, looked and felt like an enormous cathedral.

"We touched down gently, our exhaust setting fire to the grass under our venturi. Clouds of smoke and vapor obscured our view as the automatic fire-extinguisher, carried by all scout ships, came into action. It was not until the smoke had cleared that the Engineer was able to make his tests of the atmosphere. He pronounced it breathable.

"We wasted no time in scrambling down to the airlock, down the ladder to the grass. The air was more than breathable—after our months in the tin coffin, with the ever-present smells of cookery, and hot machinery, and human bodies, it was like wine. Oh, I know that that's an overworked simile—but the air *was* like wine. It had a slightly higher oxygen content than the atmosphere of Earth, than the artificial atmosphere of the ship.

"THE SUN, as I've said, had just set, and the tall, steeple trees stood in dark silhouette against the orange and crimson, blue and green of the Western sky. To the East a large, golden moon (we had visited it, and found nothing of interest) was lifting over the leafy spires of the forest, and the first, faint stars, silvery, scintillating specks against the pale, but darkening blue, were beginning to appear.

"Somewhere there were birds singing—oh, we *knew* that they were birds, we knew that they weren't some utterly repulsive (by our standards) life form that some freak of evolution had endowed with the same throat structure as the Earthly song birds. There was the shrilling of what could have been cicadas. There was the sound of chanting, approaching through the trees, the deep voices of men, the pure, silvery voices of women. It was then that I thought of the cathedral as I imagined a choir walking in slow procession along the aisle.

"'Skipper,' the Navigator was saying, 'what shall we call this planet? Eden?'

"'So you think that there are serpents,' I replied, jesting feebly to try to break the spell of the Sabbath peace. 'Hadn't

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we better get back into the ship for our side-arms?'

"'NEVER HERE,' he said. 'Never here. Can't you *feel* it? This place is...*good*.' He grasped my arm. 'I think that we should go. I think that we should log this world as uninhabited and uninhabitable, with no minerals worth the Long Haul.'

"'We are officers of the Survey Service,' I told him. 'We have our job to do.'

"We stopped talking and turned to stare.

"Through the trees they came, walking slowly and in time, but with the effect of a ritual dance rather than of a march. Their naked bodies gleamed with a luminous pallor in the twilight. They were human rather than merely humanoid, and they were beautiful people. Walking with them came the beasts—great cats that could have been cousin to the Earthly tiger, graceful deer, smaller creatures like rabbits, rolling-gaited, amiable bears.

"The singing stopped—not abruptly, but dying gently away. The leader of the people—judging by his silvery hair he was old, but his body was almost youthful—stepped forward toward us, one of the huge cats staying by his side. He said something to us, his musical voice holding an obvious note of interrogation. He gestured towards the ship, and repeated his question.

"I snapped an order to the Navigator. Reluctantly he climbed back into the ship, returned, after a few minutes, wearing the weird, bristling helmet that was the portable psionic transceiver. He stood there waiting for the native to ask his question again.

"'HE SAID, 'The structure of their brains isn't quite the same as ours, Skipper. It couldn't be. But it's not too dissimilar. As near as I can make it out he's asking us who we are and just what is the flying, fiery tree...'

"That part about the 'flying, fiery tree' had me puzzled at first—then I remembered our first impression of the forest, of the way in which the steeple trees had reminded us of tier upon tier of rockets.

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"'Try to tell him,' I said, 'that we are friends. Tell him that the "flying, fiery tree" is our home and that in it we have come from the stars...'

"'I'll try,' said the Navigator, and stood there with an expression of intense concentration on his face. 'I *think* I'm getting it across,' he said at last. 'These people although primitive, are intelligent...'

The native said something.

"'He says' said the Navigator, 'that we are welcome guests in....in... The nearest I can get to it is "the garden"...'

"'Thank him,' I said.

"And then—after all, this world, for all its seeming friendliness, might hold some deadly dangers—I decided that we would return to the ship, shutting ourselves in and maintaining a watch, leaving further contact with the people until the morning. Neither the Navigator nor the Engineer was pleased by my decision—but I was the Captain, and this was my first command, and I did not propose to lose it through any carelessness on my part.

"WITH THE morning, the people were there again, accompanied by their beasts. They looked no less attractive in full daylight than they had in the twilight. They brought us gifts—woven baskets of fruit that gleamed gold and green and scarlet, that tempted us to sink our teeth into them—but this, of course, we could not do until the Engineer, in his capacity of Bio-Chemist, had made his tests and analyses.

"We offered gifts to the people, but they displayed no more than a polite interest in what we had to show them. Clothing seemed only to amuse them. Knives they had, it would seem, no use for. Our food and drink they found slightly repulsive.

"Taking the precaution of arming ourselves, and making sure that the airlock was securely locked against intruders, we walked with the natives to their village. It was no more than an aggregation of simple shelters, with no pretense of orderly lay-out. There were, we noticed, no cooking fires. Neither was there evidence of

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the use of the wheel or the lever.

"During our walk through the forest one point that had puzzled me was cleared up. Many of the friendly animals that accompanied the natives were obviously carnivores—the big cats, the bears, the wolf-like dogs—and yet they all seemed intent on proving the validity of the prophecy about the lion lying down with the lamb. But surely the things must eat—and I couldn't imagine them subsisting on the fruit that grew in such profusion.

"Anyhow, during our walk to the village, we found evidence that the carnivorae were just that. We found the mangled carcass of a deer, with one of the tigers tearing off great bloody hunks of flesh. It looked up guiltily as we approached. It stood there as does a domestic cat when caught out in some transgression—sullen, ears back, knowing that it is in the wrong but reluctant to admit it to itself. The leader of the people scolded it. The tiger that walked always by his side growled, leapt forward and cuffed the other beast viciously.

"THE NAVIGATOR, who was, of course, wearing the transceiver explained. 'As long as the animals live with the people they must do nothing to offend them. In this area—which they call, as I told you, the garden—all life is sacred. That tiger will be banished, and, in all probability, when the other tigers leave the garden, as they must do, to feed, they will seek him out and kill him. . .'

"'I feel rather sorry for the brute,' I said.

"'The Navigator ignored me. 'The fascinating part of it all,' he went on, 'is the power that these people have over the animals. The force of example, perhaps or the authority of an elder brother, a well-beloved elder brother. . .'

"It was then that we got to the village, and were seated, rather ceremonially, on the soft grass under the shade of a tree. The banquet that followed would have suited the tastes of some people—fruit in great variety, a beverage not unlike sweet cider with most

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of the alcohol removed. Frankly, I found myself looking at the deer and the rabbits that played among us and feeling a certain sympathy for the tiger. I began to wonder if we should be allowed, as were the other carnivorae, to leave the garden to foray for fresh meat in the outside world.

"BUT WE HAD come to this world to explore and survey and investigate, not to satisfy our cravings for a steak dinner washed down with Burgundy. Any violation of the taboos of our hosts could well mean the ruin of our careers in the Survey Service. We were ambassadors as well as spacemen, and had to behave as such.

"And so, in the days that followed, we continued to behave as ambassadors. The other two had their tasks—I, as the alleged Ethnologist, had mine, among which was the learning of the language of the people and the compiling of a dictionary. This was even less easy than it would seem, one of the main stumbling blocks being that the people seemed singularly deficient in curiosity. At last I found one who was willing to co-operate. It was a woman, the wife of the headman of the village. She was, I think, younger than he was—much younger. She was lovely and, somehow, more of a woman than were the others of her tribe. She, like them, went naked—but her nudity was not the innocent nudity of a child. It's hard to express just what I mean—but I had, quite often, to remind myself of my ambassadorial status. I often wonder what would have happened if... Oh, it doesn't matter. Not now.

"Her name was Eelulie, and the smooth, liquid syllables bring back the memory of the smoothness of her skin and the liquid grace of her movements. She was...lovely. I've said it before, and I'll say it again. It's the only word.

"SHE practically lived aboard the ship, and soon began to evince curiosity as to the functions of this, that and the other. She acquired a taste for our food and drink—I'll always remember how much she enjoyed, after her first rather timorous mouthful, one of our

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precious steaks that we broke out from the store and cooked in honor of the Engineer's birthday. I had to explain the process of cooking to her, and she was very disappointed when she learned that it would be impossible to set up a high frequency range in her village. But, after all, cooking can be accomplished by fire—people managed quite well before the science of electronics was even dreamed of.

"Her people did not, as I have said, have fire. They had—nothing. They wanted nothing. And yet, apart from the cooking angle, there must have been times, I thought, when a cold wind would sweep down from the Pole or a dismal rain would fall. It was high summer in this part of the planet where we had made our landing and, for all we knew, this might have been an exceptionally clement season.

"The real reason, of course, was that I was more than a little in love with Eelulie. I wanted to leave her a gift, something that could bring only good to her and her people. I wanted to be able to think of her being revered as the woman who brought the boon of fire to the people. I wanted to be able to picture her, when I was back in the black deeps of interstellar space, sitting before a blaze that she herself had kindled, while around her sat the great cats and the huge dogs, grateful for the friendly warmth.

"LUCKILY, my sketchy training as an Ethnologist had included a course of study on the primitive peoples of Earth. I knew how fire had been made in the past. I toyed with the idea of constructing a tinder-box but abandoned it. Flints would be common enough, and tinder, but steel was the problem—not for me, but for her. Should the original box be lost, there would be no possibility of her making another. The idea of a magnifying lens, to be used as a burning glass, I rejected for the same reason. Finally I decided upon a fire-stick—you must have seen them in museums. The operator has an affair like a bow, with the bowstring passed around a pointed stick of some very hard wood, and he works this like a drill

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in a hollow bored in a piece of softer wood. The friction engenders heat—and fire.

"It was fun going with her into the forest and finding the most suitable materials. It was fun, assembling the first crude machine—and it was fun, even, as I blistered my hands working at the confounded thing until I got the hang of it. It was fun teaching Eelulie the art.

"And then at last, it was time for us to leave. Two months we were allowed for the exploration of an Earth-type, inhabited planet, and two full months we had taken. Our hold was packed with specimens and samples, our files were bulging with written accounts and reports, with films and recordings. There was nothing to hold us, but we were sorry to be going. The people were sorry to see us go.

"THEY CAME down to the clearing on the morning of our blasting off. They came down to the clearing—the men, the women and the children, and their tame, attendant beasts. Amam, the headman, was there, of course. And Eelulie. I envied Amam. Space would be very lonely, lonelier still for the memories of the golden-haired, golden-skinned woman in every corner of the ship.

"It was a cold morning—the first cold day that we had known. The wind was from the north, and was bringing with it fitful flurries of chill, drizzling rain. The people looked uncomfortable, and so did the animals. One of the tigers sneezed, and the bears were not their usual amiable selves.

"*And Eelulie will change all this,* I thought, more than a little smugly. *She will be known as the woman who brought fire from the flying, fiery tree . . .*

"The people were singing, a sort of farewell song. We—the Navigator the Engineer and myself—walked among them, shaking hands, speaking a few words to men and women whom we had come to especially know and like.

"I saved my farewells to Amam and Eelulie until the last. To Eelulie I said, 'At least I have left you something against the cold.' Amam asked,

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'What is it?' His wife replied, 'I will show you, after our friends from the stars are gone.' He said to me, 'I am not sure that I like this. For generations we have lived in harmony with our world without changing our ways. I have heard much of your world, from Eelulie and do not think that we should try to copy you.' She said, 'But I think that there is no harm in making a little comfort for ourselves, in bringing the warmth of summer into our winter days and nights.'

"'Goodbye,' I said. 'I may be back. I hope so.'

"I CLIMBED the short ladder to the airlock, climbed the longer ladder up to Control. The Navigator had set the warning siren going before I got there. As I sat in my chair, at the controls, I could see the people and their animals walking slowly to the verge of the forest.

"Reluctantly I fed power to the rockets. Slowly we lifted—slowly at first, then with mounting acceleration. We drove through the greyness of the overcast, out into the clear sunlight above the cloud layer, which lay below us like a vast field of snow. We drove out through the last tenuous shreds of atmosphere and then, while the Navigator and the Engineer busied themselves with the preparations and adjustments that had to be made before the interstellar drive could be put into operation, fell into a closed orbit around the planet.

"I was sorry when they reported that all was ready. I was sorry when the Drive started and the beautiful world below us went out like a snuffed candle flame.

"IT WAS YEARS before anybody visited that world again. It was not, as our preliminary survey had indicated, sufficiently rich in minerals to make exploitation profitable—besides, the existence of an intelligent race militated against both exploitation and colonization. So the planet became merely a name and a number in Survey Commission's records, a few boxes of typescript, films and tapes in the files.

"It must have been all of thirty five years before I was

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in that sector of space again. It was my last voyage before retirement and I was, as you know, Captain of the biggest of the new ships, *Lode Star*, with a large crew of specialists in all fields.

"As Master of such a vessel I had something of a free hand. I could, as long as I didn't overdo it, indulge my whims. And I felt the urge to revisit the planet that my Navigator, all those years ago, had called 'Eden' I wanted to meet again the kindly people and the friendly animals. I wanted... Well, I'll be frank, I wanted to see Eelulie again. We had been more than friends—the similarities of our two species had been far greater than the differences. I wanted to see how the years had treated her.

"And so, at last, we drifted slowly out of the cock-eyed Time and Space generated by the Drive, found ourselves hanging, as my Navigator had predicted that we should, over the fair planet. From our orbit it looked unchanged. I chose to make my descent in one of our Scouts—a craft very similar to the one in which I had made my landing all those years ago. I was confident that I would be able to set her down at my original landing place—a call on the psionic radio to Central Records had supplied me with all the necessary data. I took three officers with me.

"AS BEFORE, it was at sunset of a fine summer's evening when we landed. Little seemed changed—at first glance. The same clearing was still there, surrounded by the same steeple-trees. When I left the ship I stepped on to the same velvety grass.

"Yet there were changes. There was evidence that somebody had built a fire towards one corner of the clearing. This pleased me. The gift that I had left for the people had not gone unused. What worried me and puzzled me, however, was the little pile of well-picked bones beside the remains of the fire.

"'A primitive culture, sir,' said one of my Lieutenants. 'Do you think that it is wise to stray far from the ship, with night coming on?'

"'Look out!' yelled one of the others suddenly. His pistol

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hammered loudly. He turned in time to see one of the great cats in mid-leap, dying before it hit the ground.

"'What have you done, you fool?' I demanded angrily. 'These things are friendly. The natives treat them as pets.'

"'It didn't look friendly as it jumped,' said the Lieutenant sullenly. 'It looked hungry.'

"'I'm sorry,' I said. 'You probably saved our lives. Get back into the Scout—we'll return to the ship at once.'

"'But, sir...'

"'Get back into the Scout,' I repeated.

"I DIDN'T feel like explaining. I didn't feel like telling them that the very atmosphere of the planet had changed, that the peace of the summer evening was not, as I had first known it, a real peace, but was now just an ominous silence through which the hunted fled and the hunters pursued.

"Worst of all was the feeling of guilt.

"I didn't set foot upon the planet again. I sent research teams down. I lost five men—two of them were surrounded and torn to pieces by a pack of wolves; one was savagely mauled, so that he died, by one of the tigers; the other two were ambushed by a party of savages armed with bows and arrows. The research teams brought back prisoners, and I was able to question them myself—I have an excellent memory for languages. I heard the story—it had already passed into legend and besides, as I was saying, the Mannschen Drive does odd things to Time as well as to Space, and the Drive must have been malfunctioning at the time of my first landing—of Eelulie and her husband Amam, who lived in a garden where all the beasts were friendly, and of how Eelulie was tempted by a monster who came from out of a flaming, flying tree and was given the Forbidden Fruit, the apple from the Tree of Knowledge, to eat...

"OH, IT ALL fitted in. I had given Eelulie fire. I had introduced her to meat as a food. In my primitive firestick I had given her a tool

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that, with very little ingenuity, could be converted into a weapon. a bow. And when Man, on this world, became a killer and a hunter he lost the respect of the beasts, and was himself killed and hunted. . ."

He picked up the Bible again. He said softly, "And to think that I, like you, once thought that this was no more than the mythology of an obscure Semitic people."

"But it is," I said. "It is, Captain Aspinall. What else can it be?"

He ignored me.

"What has happened to the race," he asked softly, "who came to this world, to Earth, all those millions of years ago in their starships? They, like me, must have found Man living in a state of idyllic harmony with the brute creation. They, like me, must have been well meaning fools.

"Were they, I wonder, reptilian—so that in the legend they are referred to as 'the serpent'? They could have been—but, on the other hand, 'serpent' may be only an expression of hatred rather than of fact.

"What was Eve like? Was she as beautiful as Eelulie?

"But this is what worries me, what frightens me. . . What happened to the man, or the being, who thought he was setting Mankind's feet on the upward path but who, in actuality, was instrumental in causing the Fall?"

I tried to cheer him up.

"We must have Progress, Captain."

"Why?" he asked bleakly.

And the trouble is, I've been wondering the same myself ever since.

★

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editorial

YESTERDAY'S WORLD OF TOMORROW: 1929

WITH THE aid of hindsight, we might call the cover for the January 1929 issue of *Amazing Stories* a bit of symbolic prophecy. Frank R. Paul's painting shows the Woolworth building—and in the background, the Municipal Buildings—falling under the relentless pressure of a wall of ice. The actual crash came on October 24th; and the world was soon locked in what my generation knows as the "Great Depression".

But few suspected at the time, as the police raided speakeasies and bootleggers, theaters throughout the nation began to install sound equipment as "talking pictures" spread, and radio began to become a big business. At the same time that Herbert Hoover was inaugurated President, Franklin D. Roosevelt became Governor of New York state; but the great "Roosevelt" of the day was still the beloved "Teddy"—Rough Rider, President, and Big Game Hunter, now newly-appointed Governor of Puerto Rico.

Aviation was making great strides as airmail lines linked the United States and Latin America, and the schedule for night transcontinental service between New York and San Francisco called for a thirty-one hour trip. In the Antarctic, Admiral Richard E. Byrd made

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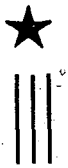

Novelet of Tomorrow

LOVERS SUBVERSIVE

by D. A. Jourdan

illustration by EMSH

In a society where only first-class citizens were allowed to breed, love was forbidden for everyone else. For even Van, the prosecutor chosen by the World State to discipline a man who had flouted the law, agreed that a childless marriage was meaningless. Then he met Rhea ...

VAN WATCHED his secretary give the yellow poppies on his reception table a careful half-turn. She surveyed the entire office slowly and critically, came over and changed the position of his visitor's chair minutely, and re-stacked the morning mail so that the communications were in exact alignment.

Closer, he could see that his prim, middle-aged secretary

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Security Police had seized the woman in the case, for an example had to be made of all who dared flout the breeding laws.

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had actually been using artificial aid in reddening her lips. He tried not to let his amusement show. "Something tells me we're being honored by a visit from one of the powers of the earth..."

The narrow pink lips tightened. "We, Van, are the powers of the earth! The future of the earth lies in its breeders. Never forget that," she admonished her superior severely. Her face relaxed, and she said, "But I do wish you had worn your blue suit..."

Van stood obediently and let her stuff him into the gray jacket. He was well aware that his secretary had never made use of her right to breed, but he also knew that her position as a member of the privileged class was the most important thing in her life. "Just who is about to descend on us?"

Dola beamed. "We're not supposed to know—I got it through channels. It's a surprise visit by Kori." Her tone conveyed equal parts of awe and satisfaction. "Of course everyone has known for months who was behind those anonymous summonses that have been taking you on so many big jobs lately. But a personal call! He's coming out into the open!" She glanced at her wrist, repeated regretfully, "It's a pity about the suit—the blue makes you look young and happy— Stop frowning!"

VAN, WRYLY watching her hurry across the office, could think of several dozen reasons why, as one of Europe's top planners he had a legitimate right to display some signs of tension or fatigue.

She swivelled at the door, reminded him, "Don't take off your coat. And look as if you're thinking. But happy!" she ordered, contradictorily.

Van could understand her excitement and satisfaction. He had felt the same way when he had first been summoned to work for Kori.

Moments later Dola returned escorting, unaccompanied, one of the twelve members of the World Council.

Kori was a small man, smaller even than most non-breeders, and dark. His size, in that year of 2260, was a shock; but even breeders occasionally came up with something less

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than a perfect physical specimen; and once born, only a citizen's tests could affect his fate.

He carried himself with exactly the correct air of amiable condescension considered becoming in citizens of the first class. It was almost as if he enjoyed the contrast between his own meager proportions and those of most planners.

White teeth gleamed momentarily in the dark face in a moderate smile. "You seem to be expecting someone," Kori commented. "Me?"

Van began honestly, "Why, as a matter of fact. . ."

Dola interrupted hastily, "As a matter of fact, Councilman, I sometimes think Van is psychic. They used to believe that intuition was the property of women, way back in the time of haphazard breeding, but it may be that now even the men. . ." She broke off, blushing. "But I'm babbling. I beg your pardon, I must be so overwhelmed by the honor. . ." She recovered her poise, bowed crisply and left the room.

THERE WAS a brief silence, which Kori broke thoughtfully. "If I had wanted this to be really a surprise visit, Van," he gestured with his head toward the door through which Dola had just left, "it would have been."

Van started to grin, then frowned slightly. It was almost as though Kori, in his amiable fashion was warning him of something. "We're honored by the visit," he temporized. He knew Kori slightly and liked him, but it was not easy to understand him for all his mild benignity. Van wondered if this was a quality that resulted from his high position—or caused it.

"I have another job for you." Kori looked at him blandly. "It's the sort of thing my assistant—or successor—would have to handle from time to time."

Van, now feeling the physical sensations of excitement, reminded himself that he was as impressionable as Dola. Kori had just given him a broad hint that he was considering him for Aide, but he tried to speak coolly. "I've enjoyed the other jobs you've assigned me in the past. . ."

The dark man nodded a

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couple of times. "A pleasure reservation, a revised curriculum for general education..." Kori looked grave. "Yes. But you will not enjoy this..."

THE SELECTION of a Councilman had to depend on merit—and chance. Despite his recognized ability, Van knew there must be dozens of other planners as capable as he was. Chance had already contributed as much as he could hope for in bringing him to Kori's attention. He felt a certain reluctance because of the Councilman's manner, but he knew that this opportunity wouldn't occur again. "Still, if it has to be done..."

"Good!" Kori smiled subtly. "A distasteful responsibility... I felt it was only fair to warn you." He shrugged. "I wanted you to know that a Councilman, too, pays for his privileges..."

"And the job?" The uncertain feeling in the pit of his stomach told Van that his viscera already knew he had made a mistake. He tried to thrust aside the imagination he had spent thirty years developing.

Kori glanced down at his own hands, then across the room thoughtfully. "You may remember the matter of Dargo, first class citizen of a French coastal town. About six months ago. He bred."

Van shook his head. "A first class citizen. What's wrong with that?"

Kori glanced quickly at Van. "Illegally. Of course."

Van flushed. "Of course." His own stupidity, he knew, was because he now knew what was going to be asked of him. He wondered what had seemed so attractive to him about promotion. Why did a man always want to rise? What neurotic discontentment bred ambition?

Kori went on, "He had so much to lose, so little to gain. We like to investigate these matters thoroughly—one never knows where one will find a weakness in the social structure. And it's just such incidents as this that can sometimes focus light on the darker places..."

VAN HAD a momentary vision of what the words "The darker places" meant to him personally. It was the way

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a genetics text had referred to the volcanic islands that sheltered the surviving naturals, descendants of the people who had ignored scientific breeding.

VAN FORCED his mind back to the case Kori was referring to. The woman had jumped from a building, had splattered her flesh—and the flesh of the innocent prisoner of her body—on the smooth, hard causeway of the city. He wondered at a citizen of the masses having the courage to do such a thing; there was so much time for thinking before one could ascend to the top of a tall building, step through a window. His voice was not happy. "What must I do?"

Kori's eyebrow rose fractionally. "It will be your privilege to represent the World Council against Dargo, planner, of Marseilles. Charge: breeding out of class." His voice became less official. "You'll have absolute authority and will prosecute the charge and judge the evidence as a Councilman would do."

Kori looked at Van neutrally. "What's the matter? Have you had no experience enforcing our laws?"

"Against the masses, certainly. But not against a member of my own class!"

"Your loyalty does you credit," Kori said coolly. "However, first class citizens do occasionally disobey the law, and when they do they must be punished." He watched Van. "Very well."

Kori continued briskly, "You'll proceed to Vienna for the trial. The prisoner is on his way there, accompanied by certain specialists who are to assist you in obtaining evidence and information. The change in venire is because there has already been too much public interest in the crime and I didn't want the trial held in the home city of either Dargo, you, or even myself." He smiled grimly. "We'll all keep clear."

Van set his jaw. "If this responsibility is mine, why do I need experts? The suicide is certainly a confession. All I have to do is pronouce judgment on the man."

KORI LOWERED his eyes. "There's a little more to it

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than there seems. Hundreds of years ago, when the world state was first fighting for its life, we used a certain legal technique to discipline the masses. Our citizens are more orderly, it's true, but even now from time to time occasionally it's necessary to quiet them..."

Van muttered, "The public trial." They were not held too frequently, but no planner was ever proud of them.

Kori said sharply, "If you were an ordinary citizen, a member of the masses—yet felt you were as good a man as any other—you'd want to be very sure that the breeders who ruled you submitted to an even sterner discipline than your own. The first class citizens, being human, do err, commit crimes. But our punishment must be more severe." Kori said flatly, "Since the greatest privilege is to breed, Dargo has committed the greatest crime."

Van nodded, feeling hollow. He couldn't disagree, even mentally.

Kori hammered, "The woman escaped us, but that's not important. She was a non-breeder. But the masses have the right to know that their leaders are entitled to their job, are in every way superior, and worthy of their privilege."

He rose. "Put on a good show, Van. The might and resources of the entire world are yours to command when you fight for the masses..."

II

VAN WENT to Vienna alone. Dola would have been helpful, but with her sex there was always the danger of sentiment. Either she would have despised Dargo for so far demeaning himself as to mate out of class, or she might possibly have been excited by the grandeur of a passion so irresistible it crossed the class line. He was willing to put up with the inconvenience of unfamiliar help to stay free of any further prejudices than those he already bore.

The old city was as lovely as always. It spread farther as the centuries passed, but through the wisdom of planners long dead—who were certainly his spiritual ancestors if not his actual progenitors—the newer areas merged gracefully with the ancient. The architects

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had managed to avoid the aggressively modern, without clinging to the c l o y i n g l y quaint.

There was little time for either sightseeing or reflection, for his escort took Van directly to the Hall of Justice, and to a luxurious suite of offices high up in the building.

A beautiful girl in blue flicked wonderful brown eyes at Van's escort in merry dismissal, then directed them at him in friendly greeting. Her voice was respectful but without awe. "If the Councilman Surrogate will follow me?"

It was not far from her desk to the handsome, spacious office. She opened the door, permitted Van to precede her. "Councilman Surrogate Van, Bardi, Administrator."

The man behind the desk rose and crossed to Van, his dark waves bobbing relaxedly as he moved. He smiled. "I won't be a liar and say we're glad to have you..." the smile grew warmer. "But you don't look too bad, actually."

VAN GRINNED back. "I won't be a liar and say I'm glad to be here." He rolled his eyes to the left, where he could still feel the girl's warm and scented presence beside him. "But I can't deny that the unpleasantness of my mission begins to have compensation..."

Bardi blushed, turned to the girl. "Er, thanks Rhea. That'll be all..."

Van refused the seat behind the desk offered him, made himself comfortable in another chair. "Of course it's an imposition to use Vienna..."

Bardi made a wry face, said dutifully, "One world, Councilman Surrogate. One people."

"Van," Van suggested. "The title is only for the duration of the job." He wondered if even the pay Kori had dangled before him was sufficient reward, reminded himself that he had asked for this job himself.

He tried to think of something pleasanter. "That is a beautiful secretary you have, Bardi. None of our northern breeders have yet inspired me with a desire to mate, but your lovely women here..."

Bardi was blushing again. "Rhea's not a breeder," he interrupted quickly. "She's the best secretary a man could

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want," he said defensively, "but she's not a breeder."

Van looked astonished. "She looks like a breeder," he said stupidly.

Bardi showed embarrassment but stubbornness. "I know it's a bit unusual. But this particular girl is extremely competent, and I work with her better than with any of our breeders. So..." He dropped his hand gracefully.

Van frowned. The temptations of life on a citizen of either class were numerous and pressing. It didn't make sense to go out of one's way to subject oneself to more. He refrained from referring to the cause of his visit, Dargo, whose crime probably had its inception in just such an innocent beginning. "How did you happen to contact a second-class citizen," he asked sternly. "To discover her—competence?"

BARDI BLUSHED deeply. "Years ago—some of the more reckless undergraduates used to call it 'social research' to strike up acquaintance with the masses. Boyish high spirits," he said deprecatingly.

"Yet, years later, you still maintain this connection..."

Bardi's face could grow no redder, his eyes were now hot, too. "There has never been anything between us." He let his anger show. "We're friends."

Van showed his scorn. "Friends with a non-breeder. Friends with a member of the masses, an inferior mind."

Bardi leaned forward, anger lancing toward his guest and superior. "It is a known fact that some of the ordinary citizens have as good intellects as any breeder. Or would have, had they had training."

Van regarded him silently for a long moment. He said chilly, "If you will show me to an office where I shall not disturb anyone, I should like to start work."

Bardi stood. "This is your office," he said with icy courtesy. He walked over to a row of filing cabinets. "These are records pertinent to the matter you are here to handle. Buttons on your desk connect directly with the west wing of the confinement area, which has been isolated for the ex-

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clusive use of your prisoner and his entourage."

Bardi hesitated. "I had assigned Rhea to your service and had her brief herself in this matter. We have a certain tradition toward guests here, and she is actually my most valued assistant. It shouldn't take too long for any of our breeders to receive the material from Rhea, however, so if you will just. . ."

"That won't be necessary." Van interrupted. "Since Rhea is informed, then let it stand at that."

"But. . ." Bardi stopped. He closed his mouth. "Nothing. I am,—of course, at your orders. . ."

HE LEFT while Van opened his small flat briefcase and put its contents out on the handsomely carved old desk. As the door closed behind him, Van opened the connection to Rhea, The easy, musical voice on the other end invited, "Order me." Van said, "I want to speak with Dargo. Here. Alone." He had caught that bit about the prisoner's entourage, he was not naive about the methods of authority.

But if he wanted every assistance Kori's corps of experts could give him, he also knew that he was morally responsible for this trial and he wanted to be sure he was actually making whatever decisions were to be made. He was realistic enough to know that his political future might rest more securely on their more practiced skill, but there was also the need to live with his own opinion of himself.

Even Van was astonished to see six men accompanying the one wan prisoner into his office. It was all formally correct. Two were in the gray uniform of the Security Police. They marched in back. The two in the white garments of medicos stood on either side of a thin, pale man who appeared drugged.

Van looked at the two healthy, assured officials who lead the party. He kept his temper; he was to be as much on display in this business as Dargo. "I wanted to question the prisoner. Alone." The medicos were depositing the man carefully in a chair. "Is he capable of intelligent speech?"

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The plumper of the two officials looked at him blandly. "Oh, yes. He's under sedation, it's true. But that was necessary, Councilman Surrogate. For his own protection. . . ."

The man in the chair made a weak noise. Van glanced at him, but his face was expressionless.

THE SECOND official could restrain himself no longer. "And for my protection," he said indignantly. "After all, he's my responsibility. And he nearly escaped."

Van looked at him deliberately. "From the World Council?"

The indignant one was not intimidated. "World or no world, we can only use men to restrain men."

The plump man said soothingly, "The prisoner had a certain regrettable influence in the area where he was known." His small, shrewd eyes were on Van knowingly. "But the Councilman Surrogate is doubtless aware of the causes for the change in venire. . ."

It was not the first experience Van had had in administering justice, but it was the first time Van had felt shame over his part. There was something degrading, with the whole world arrayed against this one man, to need any assistance beyond the man's own crime.

Nor did he appreciate being humiliated before the man he was to destroy. The essence of punishment was that the prisoner must be made to know he was wrong; otherwise, the government was practising nothing but tyranny.

Van frowned. He would have preferred having the trial in Marseilles, and damn the public feeling. Right was right and didn't need to sneak around using legal technicalities. He went over to Dargo, looked at him carefully. He was breathing shallowly but he was able to sit in the chair unaided, and his eye reflexes were only a little slow.

"All right," Van said. "I'll talk to the prisoner now." He gestured 'out' with his head. The others left, but the plump man remained. Van controlled himself. "Alone." He kept his voice unemphatic.

"Guilemont," the plump man introduced himself.

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"Councilman Surrogate, consider me only a spectator, here for your protection." He drew a gun from his pocket ostentatiously, stood holding it.

VAN LOOKED at Dargo, wondered if the heat he could feel in his face was visible. Definitely there was a jeer on the prisoner's wan face, veiled and yet somehow manifest. Guilemont would not be so bold unless he had his orders from Kori.

He resented Kori's suggestion of supervision—or if not supervision, at least chaperonage. He resented the lack of faith in him personally. After all, somewhere along the line a man had to be capable of honor and had to be trusted, even if in this World Council it was only at the Councilman level.

Perhaps that was why he was ambitious. A man wanted somehow to prove that he obeyed the law because he believed in it—not because someone was watching him and he would be punished if he didn't obey.

Van's voice was tightly governed. "The prisoner is not armed?"

Guilemont ignored the sarcasm. "Pardon me. The Councilman Surrogate is brilliant but young. There are other dangers..."

Van's tone duplicated Guilemont's cold respect. "I shall have to risk them."

Guilemont gave in with Gallic grace, deposited his gun on Van's desk. "At least permit me to leave this with you," he said, and left the room.

Alone, Van studied Dargo. The glint in his eye, if it had ever been there, was gone. Dargo was interested in nothing, not in his surroundings, his prosecutor-judge, not even in himself.

VAN POURED himself a drink from the carafe on the desk. Dola was an intelligent woman but she never could remember to see that there was fresh water for him. Van could almost understand Bardi's wanting a girl as lovely as Rhea around, but it was shortsighted of him to imagine that people would believe that it was because of her intellectual qualities.

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Lightning did occasionally hit. Sometimes, despite the constant tests all citizens received at each formative age level, members of the masses did in later life manifest proof of superiority. When this did occur, they could receive further examination; and if they were successful, they could be admitted into the ranks of the first class citizens, the breeders.

If the lovely Rhea were as intelligent as Bardi suggested, it would have been a simple matter to have her status changed, for obviously, physsically she was perfect. The water was fresh, which was more than it would have been in Stockholm, but that proved nothing.

He forced himself back to the matter at hand. Judging a citizen was like conducting a post mortem on a living being, except that one could hardly call the accused "living." By the time they came to Van, mentally and spiritually they were deader than ground meat. He had always supposed it was the conviction of their own guilt that turned them into the fear-paralyzed zombies he saw. He reminded himself that Dargo's crime was not a simple matter of unbridled human desires requiring sentence. Kori was right: Dargo's crime had dangerous social overtones.

Van let his loathing show. "How could a breeder deliberately unite himself to an inferior mate?" He had attacked Dargo's aggravating disinterest with all the disgust he was capable of, and he was not prepared for just what the prisoner did.

III

DARGO GLANCED at him briefly, then swung his gaze toward the door Guilemont and the others had just left through. He tried to rise from his chair, his expression of hopelessness intensified.

Van saw the tendons on his thin hands and arms stand out with his effort to lift himself, but he had only barely raised himself when Van strode over and shoved him back in the chair. "And where did you think you were going?"

"Out. We're wasting time." His voice held a bitterness as

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well as hopelessness. "I thought— When I heard I was to go before the eminent Van..." He shook his head. "I should have known better..."

"Known better than what?"

Dargo's eyes held despair, but the glint was there, too. "Than to hope you would be any less of a fool than the others."

"You're the fool, Dargo." Van felt himself losing interest; the man was either delirious or insane. "There are some things no one can dispute. Neither you, nor I, nor the masses. For they could destroy us all in a moment if we were wrong."

"And that's why you're destroying me?" Dargo asked jeeringly. "Because if you didn't, they'd destroy you?"

Van flushed only a trifle. "Partly," he admitted truthfully. He offered Dargo's hopeless, jeering eyes his own. His conviction must show. "Three hundred years ago two great cultures divided the earth," he reminded him. "It's no accident this is a united world today. Equal to our own, perhaps even stronger, was our enemy. But they followed a religious precept which called for a weakening of the strong and a strengthening of the weak—they did this deliberately, in its political phase naming it democracy..."

VAN WAS aware of the contrast between his growing intensity and Dargo's boredom. Dargo knew everything he knew, but Dargo had forgotten—it was easy to forget. He went on, enjoying his own fervency. "They weren't stupid, those religious ones. They bred their animals with all the science they possessed. Imagine cows producing thirty kilograms of milk a day!"

In his urgency, Van grasped Dargo's shoulder, demanding his attention. The sharpness of the man's bones disconcerted him and he felt a momentary pity for him. That made it the more important to convince him. "They spent unbelievable amounts for the purpose of breeding horses that could run a fraction of a second faster than other horses! For entertainment!"

Van looked at Dargo sternly. "But they failed to breed

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themselves." His frown was puzzled. "They had all the information. Over a hundred years before they fell to us they knew everything we knew. Gaxton, Terman had proved that only by mating superior males and females could you produce superior offspring..."

"Their own statistics showed them their tendency was to mate unevenly." Van's laugh was short and patronizing. "They felt that biological drive justified mongrelized mating, jeered at the ancient German concept of superman— They deliberately and knowingly bred down their national intellect and handed us the world." Van eyed Dargo grimly. "And you, apparently, would like to see us follow their lead."

DARGO SAID sarcastically, "You haven't re-hashed the matter in its disgusting entirety. When I was in school they said that defective females were considered the most desirable of mates, and married younger and produced more offspring than any others."

Van was running out of juice, was wearying of Dargo's untouchability. Sometimes a man went bad, but the masses had a right to expect their leaders to set an example. "Then you're prepared to admit publicly that your act was a crime against the world and that you regret it?"

Dargó, without any change in expression, shook his head.

Van felt some anger at the man's stubbornness. At his stupidity. He said wearily, "Which? You don't think you made an error, or you refuse to admit it?" He turned away, picked up a small ivory carving of Pisa's ancient tower.

"May I speak?" Van flushed at the man's emphasis, waited, but didn't turn. Dargo spoke to his back. "You call it mongrelized mating. I say that sometimes something passes between a man and a woman that is more important than the machine's blessing. More important, sometimes, than life or death..."

Van turned sharply. "We recognize temptation. There is all kinds of assistance for such situations. Right up to sterilization."

Dargo smiled grimly. "We tried sterilizing the masses to keep from over-populating the

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earth, but they didn't want to live incapable of procreation. So we settled for an efficient, well-policed system of birth control. With an occasional permission to breed for some citizen of the masses whose outstanding contribution demanded spectacular reward." His thin mouth contracted still further. "A neat compromise."

VAN, PACING the floor, hesitated at the door. "You can hardly object to an effective compromise." With both impatience and discomfort he watched Dargo laboriously draw himself up out of his chair. He wondered just how much "preparation" Guilemont had given his prisoner. He himself had not given much thought to a plan of action because it never occurred to him that any sane man would resist both the world and his own conscience. "It's also foolish for you to object to co-operating in the trial. You're one of us—you know exactly how expert we are at such persuasion..."

Dargo, moving slowly across the room, stopped and supported himself against a chair to turn and look at Van. "I do know."

Van said angrily, to cover his own discomfort, "You conclude too quickly. You might have been given permission to have this child you thought so important..."

Dargo's laugh was very soft.

Van meant to sting. "For all you know, your non-breeder might have been a breeder. You know Genetics are carrying on long-range experiments all the time—that many are raised unaware of their true class..." Dargo's face didn't soften him, he was deliberately cruel. "Your mate may have sacrificed herself needlessly. And you may be again worsening your position by too hasty..." Then he understood why Dargo was dragging himself across the room. Van had forgotten the gun Guilemont had left on the desk.

Dargo, so weak he could barely stand without support, had not forgotten. Above the gun now, his face was slowly relaxing from the lines of pain. He looked like a man, who after hard work and long service, is about to receive a longed-for reward. "It doesn't matter

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now." His voice was almost the only living thing about him. That and his eyes. They looked almost happy.

VAN CURSED himself for his stupidity. Dargo had strength enough to pull the trigger, and he knew he could not stop him. The length of the room lay between them.

He tried to blame Kori, for assigning him to a task any man would hate. Or Guilemont for his deadly "protection." But he had been depressed by the whole painful, shameful proceeding, too anxious to be done with it, and he had been careless.

Aloud he said stupidly, "You can't escape."

Dargo's smile was remote, hardly bitter. "Yes I can."

"Not alive."

"Alive." The gun moved slightly with Dargo's disdain. Van watched it, knew that he wanted life intensely. With anger and hunger he remembered the texture of Rhea's olive skin. He was only thirty, and he had spent his whole life up to that moment driving relentlessly toward the position he was now approaching. He realized suddenly all the things he had missed, had deliberately deferred until he should have accomplished his aim.

Dargo, studying him, might have been reading his mind. "Van, the Comer," he said sardonically. "You actually might have made Councilman. One of the powers of the earth..."

"I may still," Van said stubbornly.

Dargo's laugh was stronger. "I'm free," he said wonderingly. "With this in my hand, I'm as free as though I were already dead. I can't be stopped, swayed. You've failed at your filthy job," he frowned at Van. "But you just might escape. A good politician might even get clear," he gestured slightly with the gun, "of something like this. So I think I'll take you with me..." His face contorted into a grimace intended for a smile. "Unless you care to persuade me not to kill you. You're quite good at persuasion. You're all of you good at that sort of thing." His voice was softer now. "Go ahead, Councilman Surrogate. Persuade me not to kill you..."

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VAN DESPISED himself for his sluggishness before the need for action. But he was supposed to be a planner. "Brilliant" was an adjective they frequently applied to him, and he could think of nothing. Weak as Dargo was, slowed as his reflexes were, there was still plenty of time to kill and turn the gun back to himself.

Van wondered if there was a great deal of pain to having a bullet tear through your vitals, but knew that even if there was he couldn't help himself. He flung himself across the room toward Dargo.

Dargo aimed coolly at him, shot once and then turned the gun on himself for the second shot. Van saw the flashes and heard the shots and marvelled at how excitement—fear—anaesthetized a man. The shot could not have missed him but he felt nothing. He reached Dargo and tore the gun away from him.

Not until then did either of the men notice that there was no blood. No blood at all. Van, holding Dargo's weak frame, felt the hysterical laughter arising from within him. Dargo's face told Van that the prisoner, too, understood.

Barely able to restrain his laughter Van dropped the gun on the desk, hustled Dargo into a chair and poured him a drink from the decanter.

THERE WAS a sedate knock on the door and Guilemont's voice came through, slightly-raised, but calm. "Are you all right, Councilman Surrogate?"

Van smoothed his jacket. "Come in!"

Guilemont entered, smugly poised, irritatingly incurious. Van studied him with new respect and even more dislike. He gestured toward Dargo. "Perhaps you'd better get one of those doctors in here. He looks very pale to me."

Guilemont shrugged. "He won't eat. We force-feed him, but it isn't the same they tell me."

Van switched, complimented, "That was quite a trick. That business with the unloaded gun. Quite revelatory. But if I hadn't been so stupid, the trick might not have gone off just the way it did..." He

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hoped his face showed only admiration.

Guilemont shrugged characteristically. "No one could possibly be hurt. With an unloaded gun."

Van finished off his thought then sharply. "If Kori had been the recipient of your little surprise he might not have liked it even as much as I did. . ."

Guilemont was sparked into truth. "My job is to assist you with the trial. Your personal vulnerability is not my responsibility."

Van accepted his statement. Guilemont was right. He was dangerous because he envied "the brilliant young Councilman Surrogate," but that was to be expected. His own job was to use Guilemont's talents and avoid being trapped by the older man's jealousy. "What have you done so far to convince Dargo we must have his co-operation?"

Guilemont said suavely, "You are in charge. We have done little except await your orders."

VAN FROWNED at Dargo, who sagged in the chair, staring unseeingly at the impotent gun on the desk. Van handed it to Guilemont. "He doesn't look well," he suggested again, sparring.

Guilemont's ruddy face reddened more with emotion. "That's nobody's fault but his own. He's made several attempts at suicide—even now, he won't eat. You didn't give my colleague much chance to explain. But it wasn't Dargo's escape he feared but his death. It's not easy to prevent a determined man from dying."

Dargo's voice was grating. "Particularly when he has friends."

Only Guilemont's eyes showed his feeling. "Exactly," he said, and waited.

Van hesitated no longer. "My job is evaluation—projection of group trends. I've no experience with the various techniques of persuasion." Deliberately Van permitted himself the luxury of letting Guilemont know what he thought of him. "I'm sure, Guilemont, you must be very good at this sort of thing. . ."

Guilemont ignored the insult, looked worried. "He's not well," he said. "And he's very stubborn. . ."

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"Then make him amenable," Van ordered calmly. "After all, this is only one individual. And you have the resources of the whole world behind you." He remembered Kori saying almost the same thing to him, when he passed the problem of Dargo on to him. He wondered if Guilemont would also delegate the actual application of force. Watching the careful way Guilemont half-supported, half-forced Dargo to his feet and out of the office, Van suspected that this was a duty Guilemont would enjoy handling personally.

IV

A WEEK LATER, after a series of reports from Guilemont, growing in intensity from exasperation to fury, Van knew that he had been right. Guilemont took Dargo's resistance as a personal challenge, and Dargo was not the sort of man to be moved by duress.

Van realized now why Kori had given Dargo to him, but unfortunately his own talent for strategy was equally unprovocative of anything that might persuade Dargo. He wondered guiltily if it might be because of his own emotional pre-occupation, reminded himself that no man was completely the master of his biological drives.

But he had not been merely admiring the sunshine himself. The files on the prisoner were ordedly and full; and although this other tension was growing within him, he had dutifully assimilated an enormous amount of material about Dargo. All of which had added up to no single idea on how to affect the man.

There were, of course, always drugs and hypnosis to force a man to act his part correctly for the public spectacle. But the masses were not insensible to the difference between a quick and living being of free will and a quiescent mound of protoplasm. There was neither drama nor morality in punishing a corpse.

Kori, and the ancient religious ones who preceded him by so many centuries, had been very wise when they presented citizens with a clear and vivid scene of the penitent sinner submitting to, even yearning

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for his punishment. Thousands of years of so-called civilization had proven it was the most effective morality lesson the people could receive.

Van let his finger hover for a moment over the button that would bring Rhea into his room, then reminded himself wearily that there was also the problem of Dargo. The new problem was so demanding he had to force himself to keep his mind on the reason he was in Vienna.

VAN BUZZED for Rhea, and when she entered pointed at three fat folders on his desk. "You may return those to the file." He did not look at her, tried not to think about her. "And didn't you say those were the last?"

Rhea nodded, glancing at the list of names on his desk. She held a pencil poised over the bottom name. "And that completes your list of associates," she added, checking it off.

"Dargo's political science instructor. When he was in secondary school." Van gave up trying to ignore her fragrant presence. He now wholeheartedly agreed with Bardi's statement about her intelligence. He would have feared the threat her beauty and charm represented to an impressionable breeder, if he had not had an unconscious conviction that she was as much a breeder as he was himself. Reason told him that might be wishful thinking, but he was long past the point where reason could dictate.

He said, "Dargo had strongly democratic sympathies as a boy." He smiled tiredly. "The class system worried him—he felt that the world had merely exchanged one tyranny for another." His tone was tolerant. "We all go through that."

Rhea didn't smile. "Well, didn't we? Merely exchange one tyranny for another?"

Van showed his disappointment. She was much too intelligent not to understand. "There must be some order if we're not all to starve. Otherwise everyone would paint sunsets and no one would raise pigs."

Her wonderful dark eyes were very intent. "But the decision. The responsibility of deciding who shall paint the sun-

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sets and who shall raise the pigs. Who shall rule and who shall be ruled."

SHE WAS holding the three files as though someone might snatch them from her and she looked unlike her usual gay self. Van rose, took the files from her, letting his arms linger for one pleasant second around her hyacinth-scented body. "You know ours is the best system man has yet discovered," he said reproachfully. "We breed only the most perfect humans, and we take only the top percent of offspring for planners and future breeders. And if you or any citizen can improve on that you have only to notify the Council."

"But how can the testing machines know which women should breed—dare to tell them?"

Van looked at her wonderingly. "Who should know better?"

"The woman herself!" Rhea blushed at her own emphasis, tried to cover with a flood of words. "It's not fair to the women of the masses to deny them the right to breed! Oh, yes, you keep them hoping. You say those who have performed special services may be accorded the privilege of children. But it's too slender a chance, one out of millions. . ."

"Rhea, you must have seen pictures of how they live on the islands." Van knew he must convince himself as well as her. He used all the arguments he had been taught. "Dirty, cowardly, vicious—that's what man becomes if he chooses to mongrelize his species—breed haphazard, from whim or lack of self-control. Is that what you want for the world?"

She looked at him, silent but resistant.

Van said, "Only a few hundred years ago men went right up to the verge of self-destruction because they were unable to live with self-control—to breed deliberately and with intelligence." His mouth showed his distaste, his eyes his incredulity. "They had the facts, they had done all sorts of studies on genetics and eugenics. Yet they continued degenerating their species—it was like setting fire to their own house while they were in it!"

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VAN SAID sternly, "They used just the arguments you would: some mystic attraction between people told them which would produce the finest offspring." His laugh was short and bitter, for he wanted to use that very thinking in his own mind.

The lovely, angry face was discouraged now. "I know you're right. But I feel..." She broke it off. "Never mind."

Van took her cool hand, resisted an impulse to kiss it. "When this is over I'll use whatever power I have—and I have some—to obtain a breeding permit for you, Rhea." He held his breath lest class loyalty make her refuse his offer. Many did, even when offered the opportunity. "Of course the permit would only be for you," he warned. "You'd have to mate with a breeder." It seemed like a subtle way to find out if she had anyone in mind.

The gayety was back in her face and with it, mischief. She said demurely, "The man is a planner..."

There was someone. Van's face fell. He said gloomily, "I'm very happy for both you and Bardi..."

Rhea picked up the files she had started to put away, took them briskly to the cabinets. "Oh, not Bardi."

From her voice Van knew she was smiling. He suspected it was at him, walked over to the files and forced her to face him. "Then who?"

She was laughing. "Who would you like it to be?"

Her lips were not only warm and soft, he knew that of the two billion females on earth, they were the only lips that were salt-sweet in a combination exactly to his taste. He wondered if even the newest machine could have told him this, suspected it could not.

IT WAS several minutes before he realized that if his hunch about Rhea being actually a breeder was incorrect, he was about to do exactly what the man he was assigned to destroy had done. It was not merely ironic, it should have been frightening. The most frightening part of all was that he felt no fear.

He put Rhea's inviting body away from him firmly. "I shall

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not touch you until I have a breeding permit."

Her eyes, behind an ardency as fervent as his own might have been a little mocking. "We don't necessarily have to breed. Or don't you trust..."

"Not in a case where the man feels as strongly as I do." He had been taught that such thinking was superstition, yet he couldn't help his conviction. "We'll wait." He didn't tell her of his hope that she might be a planner citizen herself, that the wait might not be too long. "First I must dispose of the job I was sent here for." He felt the reaction from his hope. "And I'm at a dead end."

Her eyes were so very bright Van realized why her lips had tasted salt. "Do it quickly, Van! Get it over quickly! He's me, he's every citizen who's punished for doing what he wants, and his pain is mine..."

A sudden thought struck him. "And if I can't—would you be willing to go with me to the islands? If I could get us there?"

Her face was serious, frightened. "They're violent, they say. How do we know we could survive?" She looked at him. "I'd go!"

He wanted to kiss her again, but it was too much and not enough. There was work to do, work he was failing at. He sent for Guilemont.

GUILEMONT, in front of the carved desk, shook his head angrily. "You're to be the star of this show—I know that, Councilman Surrogate." He was too angry to sneer as he pronounced Van's title. "But I have my pride, too. If I can't reach him—no one can!"

Van was alarmed. "You've not—killed him."

Guilemont was insulted. "I'm not a butcher!" His tone changed. "But he's sick and stubborn, and it's not easy to press such a man and still keep him alive..."

Van warned, "Alive is how we need him." He had already received his answer about Rhea's citizenship; his hunch was wrong. The case of the World versus Dargo no longer interested him, but if they were ever to consummate their love, Dargo's continued existence was of utmost importance. "I

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want to see him. Now, with you."

Guilemont looked at him, shrugged.

The Confinement area combined the more distasteful qualities of prison cell and hospital. The guard lounging outside the door stood and flipped the viewer mechanism for their benefit.

Guilemont waved Van to it. "Ten to one he's just sitting there. Melancholia. Deep despondency." He said with some emotion, "How can you reach a man who wants nothing?"

Van felt a stab of fear. If Dargo wanted nothing, Guilemont was right: there was no way to reach him. But he knew that there was something any man with a spark of life in him wanted, even if it was a negative desire. "But you did make vigorous effort to obtain his co-operation? You used force?"

Guilemont was annoyed. "Do you think I'm a slacker? I've done everything I dared..."

Van couldn't afford to be wrong. "But—you tortured him? You? Yourself, personally?"

Guilemont sounded self-righteous. "In the service of the masses I am not squeamish. As I suspect some people are," he hinted.

VAN HOPED that his gleam of triumph didn't show. There had been something of the willing bully in the way Guilemont had handled Dargo in his office. He had counted on that, had hoped that Guilemont was not personally squeamish. For himself, even before he found himself loving Rhea, he had been reluctant to punish Dargo. Guilemont was right.

Van gestured at the door. "We'll go in," he said to the guard.

Dargo was sitting flaccidly on his padded bench, his gaunt face empty. There was a small flicker of something as he saw Guilemont; Van's face was just another of the many that had come and gone since his crime. He didn't even recognize him. It was exactly what Van wanted: that he, personally, should mean nothing to Dargo —or at least less than Guilemont meant.

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Van said quietly, "Remember me, Dargo? Van?" He smiled wryly. "The 'eminent' planner who was to punish you?"

Dargo looked at him without interest, nodded.

"I have a suggestion. Something that might change your mind about co-operating with us."

Guilemont looked sullen. "Rome wasn't built in a day," he said. "Given time, I'm sure I can persuade Dargo to assist his government in his trial."

His eyes were on Dargo as he spoke and Dargo was unable to restrain a slight shudder.

Van felt nausea—and elation. If he had prepared a script for Guilemont to read, it couldn't go better. He said smoothly, "However time is just the problem. Right now the world is interested in why a man like Dargo would transgress against his own laws. But the masses lose interest quickly."

Dargo looked exhausted, bored.

Van said, "How would you like, Dargo, to tour the naturals' islands? See for yourself the results of acts such as yours?"

GUILEMONT was outraged, horrified. "No!" he exploded. "It would be too dangerous! If he ever escaped there we'd never find him!"

Dargo had ignored Van's suggestion when he first made it, but he glanced curiously at Guilemont's intensity.

Van said tightly, "I must prove to him he's wrong!" Days ago he would have said those words in complete sincerity. Now, he could only hope he was a convincing actor. Liar.

Guilemont jutted out his chin, glared at Van. "The terrain is ideal for one man to hide in—it's so rough we've not had a census taken for hundreds of years. Short of absolute destruction we couldn't even control the islands. And the Council would never risk destruction of our only reserve of pre-scientifically bred humans."

Van said patiently, "I'm not asking you to turn him loose there. I only want to show him the place. He's not going to escape."

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"I refuse," Guilemont said hotly. "I won't be a party to this."

"I'll take the responsibility," Van said easily.

"Impossible!"

Dargo had been watching them with slight but then growing interest. "Maybe I'd like to see the islands. Maybe they're not the hell-holes we've been told..." His eyes were on Guilemont as he spoke.

Van's heart leaped. He had not been betting on Dargo's desire to see the islands, for dead men are not interested in proving themselves right, and Dargo was dead, had probably died with the woman. He had bet on the first and last emotion a human being has: hate. He had bet on Dargo's hatred for Guilemont and he had won.

For Guilemont's benefit, Van said carefully, "And if you discover your error, you'll publicly admit it?"

Dargo grimaced. "A fair price."

Guilemont said excitedly, "This is insane. I absolutely refuse."

Van looked at him. "However, I believe I'm in charge here..."

V

HE DIDN'T even know where the islands were, but by moving through the correct channels, Van was able to get permission and transportation arranged immediately. He suspected Kori's hand in the speed with which it was accomplished, but the important thing was that he and Dargo, accompanied by a limited entourage, were actually to be permitted to visit the highly secret area.

Van didn't even tell Rhea his full plan until they were there. Then he couldn't keep still. "Here they live literally as the people of the past did culturally," he said, smiling. He felt gay and young and reckless. "On a live volcano."

The climate was tropical, temperature-wise little different from the regulated temperatures of the large cities of the world. But because this was natural, there was a subtle difference in the feeling of the moisture content of the air on the skin.

The habit of responsibility made him ask again. "You're sure you'd be willing to spend

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the rest of your life there? Perhaps eating your food raw—if there is any food to eat?"

Rhea's smile was not happy but loving. "The naturals live, somehow."

"And kill." Van's mouth was suddenly straight. "But I'm sure I can take care of you, Rhea."

SHE KISSED him, trustingly. She smiled. "If we're going to be completely insane—perhaps its best not to think about it."

"I think I've considered all the angles," Van said. "Dargo may or may not make his public confession—we'll never know. Because we're going to be hidden away somewhere on the islands, here. Remain here forever..."

"That insane?" Rhea shivered slightly.

He said quickly, "We'll build our own paradise. Our own Garden of Eden..."

"They'll kill us. Savages always hate strangers." Her voice held submission to the inevitable, a hidden hopelessness.

Van forced a larger buoyancy into his tone. "They'll probably make me their chief—their god. To make sure, I'm taking this." He patted a holstered weapon he wore under his jacket.

"And when we fall asleep?" Rhea asked sadly.

He smiled at her. "By that time we'll be friends." He said urgently, "Rhea—Kori, World Councilman, was actually considering me for successor. If I was able to survive in our world, I can survive in this."

Rhea studied him helplessly. "But why give up all you had achieved? Why not use your position to help us. Perhaps you could..."

"Even if I could..." Van frowned. "It would be cheating the very laws I'm supposed to be administering. Before—I believed in what I was doing. What the world was doing. Now—it would be like taking gifts from someone you hate!"

"Integrity..." There was a ghost of her mischevious smile. "Expensive..."

His own doubt made him the more passionate. "I really think we could make it, Rhea. If you want to try..."

"Defy the world? Escape it?"

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Van said stubbornly, "I've thought of everything. They could flood these islands with troops. And we could still play hide and seek with them and win. They'd need to bomb the islands to get me. Wipe out every one of their precious naturals. I don't think they would..." He smiled grimly. "But even if they were willing to pay that price—there's the volcano. You don't put a bomb down a volcano. Not without another world to sit on while you wait to see what happens."

THEY travelled through jungle, and though they carried enough to reproduce in a few generations much of the civilization they were leaving, they moved swiftly.

Van had thought of the reasons for leaving behind the microfilmed books, the technical knowledge—and had then decided to bring along all he could carry. At his leisure he could decide more wisely whether the Garden could coexist with books. Right now things were moving too fast. He wasn't sure.

There was not much time for talk. Once he told her he felt as though they were being followed.

Hours later she panted, "Are they still after us?"

It was nothing so specific as that, he had not really seen or heard anything. It was only a feeling, perhaps an instinctive reaction to the size of his crime.

HE WAS beginning to realize that he alone, plus the material he carried in the books, plus time, might conceivably jeopardize the security of the world as it now existed. It was a powerful and frightening thought, and it was hard to understand how the world could have survived three hundred years of comparative stability if one man's momentary unbalance could endanger it.

There in the beauty and sticky heat of the tropical jungle Van reminded himself that 'unbalance' was the correct word, for his behavior was reckless to the point of insanity.

As a student—and later as a planner and administrator—he had learned all there was to know about biological and psy-

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chological drives. Together they constituted a potent threat to man's sanity and the world, through its administrators, offered all sorts of safeguards against the danger. However he had ignored any possible help, had refused even to admit that he needed help.

It was largely Rhea, but there were other things that came into it, too. He had been working very hard, and he had dreaded his assignment to punish Dargo. Ambition had compelled him to go on, but some crimes were so human, so understandable, once you used the mind of the criminal as your frame of reference, that they became almost tragedies, with the criminal the victim. No decent man wanted to go around punishing men for having bad luck.

Just before the darkness came they saw paths. Van pointed them out silently, and they both moved even more quietly. Keeping off the paths they worked their way very close to a sort of village of eleven simple huts built around a cluttered central enclosure.

Rhea, visible in the reflected light of the naturals' campfires, wrinkled her nose. "Phew! Is that an animal? Or some sort of plant?"

"Neither," Van said quietly. "Remember, naturals lack our sanitary disposal facilities."

THE NATURALS did their cooking at the fires in the clearing. There were fourteen females of varying sizes and ages, and Van and Rhea could see them clearly. The young ones romped and wrestled with each other as the older ones cooked. They used as cooking vessels what appeared to be charred coconut shells and crude, baked-mud containers.

Van saw that Rhea was looking on in horror. There was little trace of order here. Van thought of the books in his pack, and his heart sank. It was no use to tell himself that he had not yet seen the men, for a civilization was an integrated thing. Both ideals and morals were highly contagious. If the women had no sense of order and comfort, the men would not be what he had hoped to find.

In a little while, as the two watched, the men came trick-

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ling into the clearing, alone or in twos, bringing food. Van saw the women perform rough cleansing operations, dressing the game somewhat before putting the fresh meat into the pots, but Rhea couldn't watch.

Rhea shuddered, glancing from time to time. She tried to comfort Van. "We'll keep to ourselves. We don't need them. We don't need anybody!"

Van's voice was flat. "Yes we do. We're human, we need humans." He gestured with his head in the flickering darkness. "And it would take generations to make people like that civilized. Maybe you never could, starting with that kind of stock..."

Rhea let her panic show. "But we can't go back! Not now!"

Van hesitated, tried to think. There was nothing. "We can't go on, not to that..." He gestured helplessly. "I knew they would be simple, fierce. But I expected to find..."

"How can we go back?"

The sadness in her voice reminded Van of how utterly she had trusted him. He knew he must salvage at least her security from the appalling mess he had made. There was a way for at least that.

VI

THEY HAD barely turned back, begun to retrace their steps when they met their pursuers. He had felt that they were being followed, even at the same time he had believed that it was impossible to follow someone in that jungle—impossible unless you began right with the quarry, almost as a member of their party. That they had been pursued was not unexpected, but he had not realized that they were being pursued from so near a distance. It was almost as though they were being escorted.

Van told himself it didn't matter. He had been insane, so it was understandable that all his ideas, calculations, were wrong.

What was even stranger was that he thought he saw Kori among the World party that overtook them and wordlessly herded them back to the Control Station. Certainly, even with the speed of communica-

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tion and transportation, there had not been time for Guilemont to have apprised Kori, and for Kori to have come to the islands, and for them to be at their heels.

Van told himself it didn't matter. Probably Kori had suspected his weakness. Since he was returning to take his medicine anyhow, it didn't matter whether he returned to the Control Station alone with Rhea or under guard. He was even glad Kori was there, for Kori would see the value of what he intended to offer. Guilemont might have rejected his p r o p o s a l automatically, simply to frustrate him.

Back at the small, antiseptic Control Station it was hard to believe how much had happened, how radically his life had been changed. Only the bars on the windows and the guard to summon him to Kori.

Kori's room was not a lot larger than the detention cell and he excused the guard with a wave of his hand. His dark face was unreadable as he pointed Van to a chair. He waited silently.

Van struggled helplessly against the unreasoning anger Kori's silent poise sparked in him. "I can't explain it to you because I don't understand it myself."

KORI SLOUCHED comfortably into the only upholstered chair in the room until he looked like a child. But the sharp, opaque eyes were very old. "Then let me explain it to you." He said flatly, "You broke down." He raised an eyebrow at Van. "Perhaps I gave you a job that was too difficult?"

"I hated the business of Dargo," Van admitted. "But I don't think that was it."

"Perhaps you came too far too fast? Because we both know I was actually considering you for Aide. And you're very young for that..."

"I was tired—not physically—something beyond that..."

"Perhaps you didn't believe in the way we govern the World. I and you and all the rest who do the work—make the judgments."

Van looked at him uncertainly. Kori's voice was grim but almost acquiescent. Almost as if in rueful agreement. Or perhaps it was only his own

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desire to believe so that made it sound so.

The dark face gave no information. "Perhaps you believed in the delightful sentiment of a people now gone: democracy. As if the undisciplined masses would ever choose what was good for them over what pleased them." Kori laughed without pleasure. "As if a child, tempted by candy, would push it aside and demand proper nourishment..." The words were jeering but the tone was different.

Van shook his head tiredly. He couldn't understand what Kori was saying by the tone beneath the words. "I have no excuse. I was mad."

KORI'S MOOD crystalized, turned chill and didactic. "Those dear, sentimental ancients concentrated on raising the lowly and crushing the strong. They were so afraid of wounding the feelings of the average man, they deliberately bred to that level—eliminated what should have been any society's most precious possession: its superior citizens."

Van wanted to defend himself, but there was nothing.

Kori said, "How they must have loved the masses, those people! It was like specifying that the links of a chain should all be constructed of the tensile strength of the weakest. We care for our masses, too. But that doesn't stop us from reproducing our best..."

Helplessly, Van repeated, "I've always believed in our way, before. I must have been sick. But I'll atone..."

"Atone?" Kori's eyebrow was skeptical, his face disapproving.

"The girl I brought," Van explained quickly. "I'm responsible for this—it would be unjust to punish her..." Kori's face told him nothing. "You wanted a spectacle," he reminded him. He was obscurely frightened of Kori's disinterest. "You wanted something to move the people. I'll give it to you." The urgency in his voice gave away his fear. "And believe it! You said—we know—the truth is visible. The people can tell what a man believes. I am ashamed. I was weak. I do regret..." He grimaced. "If I failed with Dargo, at least I

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can offer myself as substitute..."

Kori's voice was cold. "It's unfortunate that the masses—and some breeders, as well—need this occasional drama of retribution to buttress their morality. However..." his dark face was saturnine, "I must inform you that your offer would provide us with an embarrassment of public recanters. Your idea was successful; Dargo has seen the naturals and is willing to renounce his error. Your sacrifice is not needed." Kori's expression was grimly amused. "As Shakespeare said some six hundred years ago, too much protestation spoils the effect of sincerity... Or too many repentant fallen breeders..."

VAN'S HEART sank. Kori was right: two trials would be inartistic. They didn't need him now; now he had nothing to trade for Rhea's pardon. He pleaded, "But you won't hold her responsible? She's only a second class citizen."

Kori shook his head. "Wrong again. She's a breeder. Like yourself."

"She's not!" Van felt his heart thud as he realized how far back Kori must have known exactly what was going on in his mind.

"Your first instinct was correct. Genetics was doing some long-range studies on environmental effects. She doesn't know herself that she's a breeder. I intervened to have you misinformed, to see how you would react."

All of his helplessness burned into hate, focused on the Councilman. Van said savagely, "You found out. Do we need to continue this interview any longer?" He felt as Dargo must have, that even death was infinitely to be preferred to this measured exposition of his stupidity.

Kori ignored his anger, except for a slight deepening of the ironic smile. "Your ostensible reason for throwing away thirty years of successful work was your desire to procreate. You wanted the right to breed and you thought Rhea a non-breeder. What if I permit you two to procreate?"

DESPITE distrust, Van's heart leaped. To live and to love Rhea! To found a seed

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that, if it survived the constant tests it must undergo, might continue through the ages toward—later, if eternity was too poetical a conception. "It's any man's highest desire." In his position it was insane to hope. "In return for what?"

Kori ignored his question, threw out the whole subject. "Breeding with Rhea was your ostensible reason for throwing away your career." He emphasized the word. "What was your real reason?"

Van could barely see him for the blur of pain. It was hard to believe a man could be so cruel to his fellow as to dangle heaven before him as he shoved him down the pit. But Kori was doing it to him as ruthlessly as only a few days ago he had used every device he knew to goad Dargo.

His rage and disgust were as much for himself as for Kori. "Because I didn't believe in what I was doing any more. With Dargo." With pain Van remembered the despair and loathing in Dargo's face. "You seem to have the stomach for it Councilman. I just didn't."

Kori's expression showed merely courteous interest. "But you didn't seem to want to remain among the naturals and found your own system, either..."

Van was helpless with frustration, and the rage, now, was a permanent part of his brain. "I was on a leash. And I held in my hand other men, also on leashes..."

Kori suggested helpfully, "Who, in turn, held other men, also on leashes..."

Kori's look of weary tolerance quenched Van's anger as no other retort could have, silenced him.

KORI SAID, "And you were suddenly overwhelmed by the unfairness... Some citizens, through a mere fortunate accident of breeding, were able to do great work, and received privilege and power over their less fortunate fellows..."

Van heard his own voice as from a distance. "I went through all the training that all breeders receive. I accepted that there must be levels of power and of privilege. At least I thought I accepted. Apparently it didn't quite take. The flaw took thirty years to show up... Pity. The commonest

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and cheapest of weaknesses..."

"Pity," Kori repeated, in a different tone. The darkness of his eyes reflected light. "You can't always train it out of a man..." The tiredness was still in his face but he looked oddly contented. "Van, once you were very eager to be my Aide."

Van remembered. It was a long time ago.

Kori might have been talking to himself. "It's true you're on a leash. You always will be." For once there was no slightest ghost of smile on the dark face. "Don't accept because you think a Councilman wears no leash—it's shorter then and t i g h t e r." He shrugged. "But you've seen how free your naturals are. The only freedom, really, is to choose the holder of the leash. Among the naturals you decided that our system of breeding to improve mankind is right. And if it's right it must be obeyed by all, especially by the ones who administer it. Our only security lies in the integrity of those men..."

Van was able to speak. "You'd trust me? Now?"

Kori shrugged again. "You voluntarily decided against the other way. You were willing to pay with your life to reverse your error..." His twisted smile was back. "Even if the best we have to offer is merely the lesser of two evils..."

VAN SOUGHT for certainty, and frowned. "There in the jungle, I did choose our system. And I will administer it with integrity, because it is the lesser of two evils..." He hesitated, then added uncertainly, "But I'll never feel quite right..."

"Quite right," Kori cut him off. "Neither do I. You have the makings of a Councilman." He gestured toward the door in weary dismissal. "Why not tell your lovely Rhea? She, at least, will be very happy."

No, Van thought as he turned away, I'll never feel quite right. But why—could it be that one of the "two evils" wasn't really evil at all?

He had seen a crude, primitive society and the crudeness had been a shock to him—an unbearable shock to Rhea, who had pictured a natural paradise in the jungle. But he had kept

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on looking, after she turned away, and the meaning of what he saw was all too clear. For if the planned breeding of the world state were the moral and scientific way, then the naturals wouldn't have been merely primitives—they'd have been vicious animals. Evil in such a society would be visible on the surface, not concealed and overlaid with culture.

Among the naturals, children were loved and wanted—he'd seen them running forward happily to greet the men as they returned from the hunt. Women were loved and respected—the way the men greeted them was proof of that. The aged and infirm were cared for—he'd seen that food was given to the old women and the sick first, although there was only one of the latter visible—probably the victim of an accident.

So they had rules—whether they had been codified into laws, or not. In either event, these rules were respected and obeyed, and not through fear alone. Or defied through despair—the naturals displayed none of the outstanding characteristics of the masses in the society Van had chosen as the "lesser evil".

Yet...wasn't the comfort and progress of his society worth a little sacrifice? He knew he would have to concentrate on that thought and try to avoid thinking about how much that "little" really was.

Van put aside the doubt as he headed for Rhea, and a glow of pleasure began to creep over him. She would, indeed, be very happy. She hadn't observed...

And, for the moment at least, Van felt very happy, too.

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the moon is new

by DAVID OSBORNE

Captain Michael Wellman was on his way to the moon—the first man out, he hoped. Then came the orders to turn back . . .

IT WAS HALF past two on a Tuesday afternoon in 1967. At the nation's secret missile-testing base, a rather unusual missile was in its last minutes of readiness, with blastoff ten minutes away. The count-down was moving rapidly.

A man sat inside the missile, waiting.

The United States was about to make its first attempt to send a manned rocket to the Moon.

His name was Captain Michael Wellman. As he sat strapped in to protect him against acceleration, he felt calm and relaxed; but he knew that the men of the missile base were anything but relaxed.

The voice of the Base Commander, Colonel Lyons, reached him over the communication grid: "Nine minutes to blastoff, Captain. Still feel loose and easy?"

Wellman grinned. "Like a bird, Colonel. Waiting to cut loose and soar. How do *you* feel?"

There was surprise in Lyons' voice. "*Me,* Captain? I'm just sitting here in the observation tower. *You're* the man on the

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launching pad. *You're* the man going to the Moon."

"And you're the one who has to face all the reporters after blastoff. Me, I'm glad I'll be up there alone. How much time left, Colonel?"

"Six minutes twenty seconds. Let's run through the schedule one last time."

WELLMAN said, "Okay. I sit here in this cradle and wait for the rockets to toss me up into space. I get 500 seconds of four-gee acceleration, and then I sit around and look out the viewport for the next four days while the ship coasts in zero-gee free fall. And roughly eight and a quarter minutes past four on Saturday afternoon, the autopilot is going to turn the rocket engines on again, long enough to land me in the Oceanus Procellarum —which better be as dry as the Palomar boys say it is."

He moistened his lips. "I climb into my little jim-dandy spacesuit, wander around the moon for a while, take some snapshots, pick up a couple of rocks as souvenirs. Fifteen hours after landing, I get back into my ship and come home. Did I leave anything out?"

"Not a thing, Captain. Three minutes ten seconds."

In his cramped cockpit, Wellman tried to stretch. "All I do is sit here and wait, anyway. The computer down below in the belly of the ship does all the work. A mere human can't be trusted to pilot a spaceship himself."

"Not at *this* stage of the space era, Captain," said Colonel Lyons.

"I don't much mind. I'm looking forward to the trip. I always did want to make history. Me, Mike Wellman—first man on the Moon! Maybe, anyway."

"What do you mean, *maybe?*" Lyons demanded. "The ship's been tested thoroughly. There's no possibility of—of..."

"Of a blowup? Go ahead, don't be afraid to say it. But I wasn't talking about that. The odds are pretty good that this bird is going to get me there. Only thing I'm wondering about is whether someone else is gonna get there ahead of me." He laughed ironically. "I'd sure hate to find a big

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vodka party going on when I get up there!"

COLONEL LYONS did not comment. A booming loudspeaker rang out: "Ninety seconds!"

"They're clearing the launching pad now," Lyons said. "We'd better break contact. Good luck, Captain—and the next time I hear from you, it's going to be from space!"

"Sure, Colonel."

"Remember—all America is rooting for you."

"See you next week—when I get back. So long, Colonel."

Wellman settled back in his acceleration cradle and listened to the decreasing chant from outside: *Ten . . . nine . . . eight . . . seven . . . six . . . five . . .*

Blastoff, when it came, was a rougher jolt than he had been expecting, but nothing he couldn't take. He locked his face in a cheerful grin as the 500 seconds of four-gee acceleration began. There was a movie camera trained on him from above, recording his reactions, and Wellman wanted to look his best.

WHEN WELLMAN had finished his preliminary observations, it was time for him to make his first report to Earth. He activated the communicator.

"Are you reading me, Launching Base? How do I come in?"

"Clear and sharp, Captain," came the voice of Colonel Lyons.

"Glad to hear it, Colonel. Okay. Ship's time 1452 hours. Blastoff went fine from this end, and I got through acceleration well enough. Four gees isn't much fun, but I don't mind it in eight-minute stretches. The ship's in free fall now—no gravity at all. And it's weird, all right. Even after all those hours in the training chamber, I still feel a little strange."

"Strange, Captain?"

"Oh, nothing serious," Wellman added hastily. "Just that it's very quiet up here—nice. A man can really think here. And the view is *something*—wait till you see the photos! Earth looks like a big toy globe back behind me, and you just can't imagine what the stars look like against the blackness. Like diamonds against black velvet—no, better than that.

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And there's the Moon over to one side. Looks like a big silver dollar, sort of."

"How about the psychological reaction? You don't feel—*cut off?*"

WELLMAN laughed heartily. "Me? A guy whose idea of heaven is being all alone with some books? Colonel, I *like* it up here. The psych tests said I was an introvert, didn't they?"

"Well, not really. Just—sort of solitary-minded."

"Same thing," Wellman said. "Well, it's us—ah—solitary-minded people who are going to be your spacemen, Colonel. We don't mind the loneliness. Listen, Colonel, how are the cosmic-ray readings coming through?"

"Perfect. All the equipment seems to be functioning."

"Including the pilot." There was sudden bitterness in Wellman's voice. "Or rather the live cargo, because that's all I really am. This ship can get where it's going without me." He shook his head. "Okay, Colonel. I've got a few odd jobs to do on board. Checkups and stuff."

"We'll make contact with you again in four hours," Lyons said.

"Four hours—right. Okay, Colonel. Over. Out."

THE HOURS moved by. The psychological testing had shown that Wellman would not be bothered either by the solitude or by the strain, and the tests had been right. He was utterly calm; he had always set his course by what he believed to be right, rather than what he was *told* was right, and now that very detachment of mind was standing him in good stead.

The first sign of trouble came two days out from Earth. He opened the circuit and was making his regular report to Lyons at the Launching Base.

"Here I am again, Colonel. Two days out and still no sweat. I'm getting used to this no-gravity business, and..."

"Don't go on with the rest of the report, Captain," Lyons broke in. His voice was edgy and tense. "There's been a change in the operational plans."

"Huh? What kind of change?"

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"You aren't landing on the Moon at all. Pentagon orders have just come through. You are to adjust the computer to Alternate Course B. Under this course you will circle the Moon and return to Earth without making a lunar landing."

"Hey, wait a minute," Wellman burst out. "How come the switch—sir?"

"It's—it's an awkward situation, Captain." Lyons seemed to be stumbling for words. "You see, between the time I last spoke to you and now, the Russians—ah—I know this is going to be a kind of a shock to you..." Lyons paused and let the rest of his words tumble out in a burst. "You see, the Russians have made a successful landing on the Moon."

"No!"

"RADIO MOSCOW announced it two hours ago, and since then we've picked up broadcasts from the Russian moonship. They've landed, all right."

"They beat us to it," Wellman said with deep bitterness. He wanted to kick out at things, to hurl and smash. "By two stinking days! Two days earlier, and I would have been the first! But..."

"You haven't heard the worst part of it yet." Colonel Lyons' voice was cold. "The Russians have *claimed* the Moon."

"They *what?*"

"Like Columbus claiming the Western Hemisphere. We're putting up a yell, of course, but there just isn't any precedent for this kind of thing, and the U.N. is meeting to decide whether they have any right to..."

"So this is why I can't land on the Moon?" Wellman cut in impatiently.

"The Russians say they'll regard any lunar landing as trespassing on their property. We can't risk a dangerous incident, of course, and so for the time being we're going to hold back and wait till the legal aspect of this claim business is worked out."

WELLMAN could hardly believe what he had just been told. "So I can't land? You send me up here and I ride around by myself for a week and don't even put my foot on the Moon?" He shook

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his head. "Uh-uh, Colonel. This doesn't make sense. Russia doesn't own the Moon, no matter *what* they say. And they can't keep me from landing on it, as long as I've come this far."

"Captain Wellman!"

"Sorry, Colonel. I'm more than halfway there, and I'm darned if I'm going to miss my chance. I'm going to land, sir."

"Wellman! Listen to me! You can't disobey orders! We'll have you courtmartialed when you get back to Earth! We'll—Wellman, you c a n ' t land!"

"Yes I can, sir." Wellman's hand reached toward the cutoff switch on the communicator. "I'm landing. Over and out."

BY THE SIMPLE process of neglecting to alter the course punched into the tapes of the ship's computer, Wellman was able to land on the moon. All he had to do was strap down and wait. The ship's cybernetic brain took care of the rest.

He realized that he had defied orders. That he was in a state of insubordination. Well, that didn't matter. Not to him, at any rate.

He decided to make his report to Earth anyway.

"I don't know if you want to hear from me again or not, Colonel, but I'm beaming this anyway. Just wanted to let you know I've landed on the Moon as originally sch[illegible]led."

"We order you to leave the Moon at once!" Lyons was blustering. "The Russians are about to file an official protest. We. . ."

Calmly Wellman went on, "I came down right on the nose, in the designated landing area. Northern branch of the Oceanus Procellarum. And you can tell the Palomar fellows that they were right all along. Maybe this was an ocean once, but not in the last million years or so. As for the Russian ship, it isn't any hoax. I saw it when I landed. It's about fifty miles north of here. Maybe later I'll break out the rocketsled and wander over there for some vodka."

A LIGHT blinked suddenly on the communicator panel.

"Uh-oh," Wellman s a i d.

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"The Russians are trying to contact me right now. I better shift channels and see what they want. Over and out from here, Colonel."

Wellman turned the transmitter and receiver to the frequency the Russians were using. "Come on in, Ivan. *Da. Nyet, Tovarich. Nichevo.* Afraid that uses up my whole Russian vocabulary, Ivan. How's your English?"

The soviet spaceman's English was excellent. He spoke in a crisp, faintly-accented voice. "I am Captain Dimitri Novikov, Soviet Space Forces. You are illegally trespassing on our territory, American."

Wellman chuckled. "I am, huh? Say, your English is pretty good, but your thinking isn't. You say the moon is yours, eh? You're gonna set up a Lunar Soviet Socialist Republic? Sorry to disagree. Just getting here first doesn't give you the right to claim the whole place, you know."

"The matter has been considered by our legal experts. We have established prior claim. I am under orders to request you to leave Russian territory immediately."

WELLMAN felt his neck growing red. "Listen, this is cockeyed! Claiming the whole Moon? Look here, Dimitri..."

"You will address me as Captain Novikov," was the precise, pedantic reply.

"Okay. Look here, Novikov—the Moon's a big place. There's room for a lot of us up here. It really isn't fair to want to hog the whole thing yourself."

"The Presidium sets Soviet policy, not space pilots," was the patient reply. "I am instructed to warn you that you are trespassing. I do not wish to debate the matter with you."

"So I'm trespassing, then. What are you going to do about it?"

"My ship is armed."

"And you can't figure out any better way of celebrating the conquest of space than starting a war about it," Wellman said sadly.

"The United States government ordered you not to make a landing. Your government recognizes our claim. We cannot tolerate violation of our rights."

"And you're going to be

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nasty about it, I see. Well, I'll take my chances." Wellman shrugged. "Now I've got some work to do before I go back. I'll be leaving the Moon in fourteen hours and a bit."

"You must leave immediately."

"I told you how I feel about that. Hey," Wellman said. "How long are *you* staying up here? You've been here better than two days already. You planning to hold the fort forever?"

"My plans for departure should not concern you," the Russian said in a glacial voice.

"Just curious, that's all. Okay, Dimitri—maybe I'll be talking to you again soon. And —yeah—congratulations, you sneaky son of a gun. You *did* get here first! Over and out."

QUICKLY, Wellman made contact with Earth once again.

"Come in, Launching Base. Do you hear me, Colonel?"

"We're getting you, Wellman. We read you."

"I just had a little chat with the Russky. There seems to be only one of them up here. He gave me some malarkey about firing on me if I don't clear off the Moon right away."

Colonel Lyons said hotly, "Wellman, you insubordinate idiot, you're liable to touch off a war over this Moon trip!"

"What was I supposed to do? Smile politely and turn back just because they got here first? Colonel, do you think they have any right to claim the Moon?"

"Of course not. But that's not the point. You were ordered not to risk trouble by landing, and...."

"And I landed anyway. Okay. Go ahead and chop my head off when I get back to Earth. Meanwhile I'm here, and if that Russian doesn't blow me up, I expect to do a little exploring in the next fourteen hours."

"I DON'T THINK the Russian is going to blow you up," Lyons said quietly. "He's got his own troubles."

"What do you mean?"

"We decoded some of the messages he's been sending back to Moscow. Seems he made a faulty landing, and has to make some repairs on his ship. It may take him a week

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or two, and he doesn't have enough food. He's probably a very worried boy right now."

"Has Russia made any announcement about this?" Wellman asked.

"They keep telling the world he's in fine shape. But we know different." Lyons chuckled. "At least you got your ship down in one piece. Russia may be crowing about claiming the Moon, but it's going to look bad for them if their spaceman can't get back—and starves to death up there!"

"Yeah," Wellman said. "That *would* be rough. Maybe I better call him back and see if I can help him out."

"Wellman, leave him alone!" Lyons' mood of amiability was gone once again at this new threat of insubordination on the part of the unruly space pilot. "He's a *Russian,* Wellman!"

"He's a human being, and so am I. Get off the wire and let me call him, Colonel."

"I order you not to make overtures to that Russian!" Lyons bellowed.

"I'm not on Earth now," said Wellman in a level, even voice. "There doesn't need to be a cold war up here too, Colonel. And I have plenty of food to spare. Give the folks back home my love. I'm going to call Ivan again."

IT TOOK a while before the Russian ship responded to Wellman's call. Either Novikov was deliberately ignoring him, Wellman thought, or else he was just too busy trying to repair the ship. But finally an acknowledgement came from the Russian.

"Novikov!" Wellman said. "Are you getting me?"

"You have three hours to leave Russian territory," came the steady reply. "Then I must commence action."

"Look, don't give me that stuff," Wellman snapped impatiently. "I happen to know that your ship's disabled and you're in trouble."

"This is untrue. My ship is in good condition."

"And Trotsky was Rasputin's brother," Wellman said. "You know, Novikov, sometimes I feel I'm the only sane man in a universe of lunatics. Those idiots down there in Washington didn't want me to land because it might make Moscow sore if I did, and here

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you don't want any help from me because I'm not a good Marxist. It's a losing battle, Dimitri. Everyone seems to know what he really wants, and yet everybody tries so hard to get the opposite."

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"Okay. You just sit tight, Dimitri. I'm going to launch the rocket sled and get over your way with a couple of cartons of provisions. If you won't take food from a lackey of Wall Street, that's your business. But I'm coming over anyway."

Wellman broke contact without waiting for a protest from the Russian. Moving around in the tiny ship, the American found the spacesuit they had provided for him. Down below in the miniature hold was the rocket-sled for transportation. He set it up and strapped three food cartons to it.

IT TOOK some time for him to travel the fifty miles that separated the two ships, over the Moon's dead pumice-covered surface. The Russian ship, Wellman saw when he approached, had really been ploughed up. In landing it, Novikov had bashed it clumsily into an upjutting cliff in the middle of the huge plain.

Wellman spoke through his suit r.a d i o, tuned to the Russian's frequency. "Novikov! Novikov! Are you getting me? Open your airlock and let me in!"

Wellman had been prepared for a stoic refusal—in which case, he would simply deposit the food cartons outside the ship and depart, leaving the Russian to do as he pleased. But the airlock door slid slowly open. Wellman clambered up the handholds and into the Soviet space-vessel, leaving the sled outside.

"Whew! It's good to get that helmet off! Hello, Novikov. My name's Mike Wellman."

The Russian was a slim, slight man in his middle twenties, with dark hair and a wary expression. He did not look very belligerent. He said suspiciously, "Why have you done this? What trick are you playing?"

"T r i c k?" Wellman said. "Listen, friend, all I'm doing is bringing you some of my spare food. Nothing up my sleeve at all."

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"I do not understand that."

"It's a decadent capitalistic idiom. Means I'm not trying to fool you. The supplies are outside on the rocket-sled. Get into your suit and let's drag them in here, yeah?"

BUT THE Russian still did not comprehend. "I said I would fire on you—and yet you bring me food..."

"Silly, isn't it?" Wellman agreed. "But they told me they picked up your messages to Moscow—that you were going to be stuck here a couple of weeks for repairs..."

"I was not telling the truth when I said that."

"Huh?"

"No repairs will be of any help. This ship will never take off again. The rear rocket tubes are hopelessly crumpled. The fuel feedlines are severed." The Russian stared bitterly at the walls of the spaceship cabin. "It was a very poor landing. I gave incorrect data to the computer."

"And you told your bosses you could fix the damage?"

"They do not like to receive news of failure." Novikov scowled darkly. "Leave me alone, American. Take your food and go away."

"And what are you going to eat? Rocks? There won't be a rescue ship up here for a month, at least."

"There will be no rescue ship for me. I do not deserve rescue."

WELLMAN stared incredulously at the slim Russian. "You'll just sit up here and starve to death?"

Novikov's shrug was fatalistic. "I made a faulty landing. I cannot return to my country now."

"And I disobeyed orders. I wasn't supposed to land, because the Moon is Red property now. Only the only Russian here is stranded—helpless!"

"Don't mock me," Novikov said gravely.

"I'm not." Wellman laughed. "A fine bunch of spacemen we are, you and me. You smash up your ship and I disobey half my orders. But you know, I'm *glad* I disobeyed, anyway. At least now there'll be one practical result of my trip. I'll be saving a man's life."

"You..."

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"Sure. You're coming back to Earth with me. We can jettison some of the meters and stuff and make room for you. I bet you don't weigh more than a hundred fifty, tops. We can manage," Wellman said. "Yeah."

Novikov began to redden. He shook his head. "It is impossible. I am stranded, true, but..."

"Save the buts for later. And if you try to argue me out of it, I'll slug you!"

SOME TIME later, Captain Wellman made radio contact with the launching base on Earth once again.

"Hello, Colonel. I'm on my way home. It was a pretty fair blastoff, and we're twenty thousand miles out from the Moon now."

"You'll have plenty to answer for when you get here," Colonel Lyons growled. "It's a lucky thing the Russians didn't decide to get tough over that business of claiming the Moon."

"Yeah—about that, Colonel. I've left a little of the equipment behind. The next ship can pick it up. I needed the room. I've got a passenger on the return trip."

"You what? But..."

"Yeah, Colonel."

"You mean the Russian?"

"That's right," Wellman said. "Seems his ship was finished, so I talked him into coming back with me. He's down back in the galley fixing lunch now. I guess we'll both be called traitors for saying it, but—well—we've sort of become friends. He's not really bad, you know. And—just between you and me—he doesn't think Russia ought to claim the Moon, either."

LYONS WAS silent for a moment. Then he said, "I ought to be howling for your scalp, you know that, Wellman? But somehow I'm not as sore as I ought to be. You disobeyed orders right and left, you illegally gave passage to a Russian..."

"I did what I thought was right. Could I leave him to starve?"

"Well, we've salvaged one distinction out of this race to the Moon, Wellman. Maybe a Russian ship was the first to *get* to the Moon—but it was

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an American one that made the first successful round trip."

Wellman shook his head tiredly.

"No, Colonel. You've got the wrong idea. All you people down there do, and that's why I didn't listen to your orders. I like to think of this trip in a different way. Not an American ship, or a Russian ship. Stuff like that doesn't matter any more." He paused. "Call it a ship from *Earth*. Yeah. Novikov and I started out separately, but we're coming back together. The first expedition from Earth to the Moon is coming home."

THE RECKONING

The series of fact articles by Thomas N. Scortia has brought forth the full range of response; "outstanding" voters were exactly balanced off by those who disliked it — but beyond this point approval is a little ahead of those who rated it below the median. It finally received a score of 2.43, which would put "Operation Bootstrap" in 4th place were it listed with the stories below.

The cover was approved by a very definite majority. On the question of continuing the "Yesterday's World of Tomorrow" editorials, opinion is approaching an equal balance — more votes are needed.

Here's the final point scores for the stories in the December issue:

1. Gift From the Stars (Wilhelm)	1.79
2. New Science of Astronomy (Franson)	2.12
3. Crash Program (Wesley)	2.20
4. Vector (St. Clair)	3.31

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Novelet

THE RENEGADE

by Thomas N. Scortia

illustrated by ORBAN

The Teranu had had a high-culture civilization a thousand generations before the Great Wall of China was built on Earth. And it had remained stable all this time—until the Earthmen came. It was the thought of this being destroyed by greedy barbarians that had driven Bartok over to the natives. And Lieutenant Boudet was sickened at the way the major dealt with beings who had created the magnificent works of art he had seen . . .

BOUDET was watching the native guides from the control deck of the command halftrack as they lined up on the desert outside for their daily inoculations. That was when it began to hail.

The hailstones were as big as golf balls. They fell from the dull red sky with a fantastic velocity, throwing up spurts of dust and sand. For an instant, it seemed as if someone was firing a machine gun into the dead white sand before the half-track.

The native guides threw themselves to the ground and drew their soft arms and legs up under their bodies. The horny carapaces that covered their dorsal surfaces spit frag-

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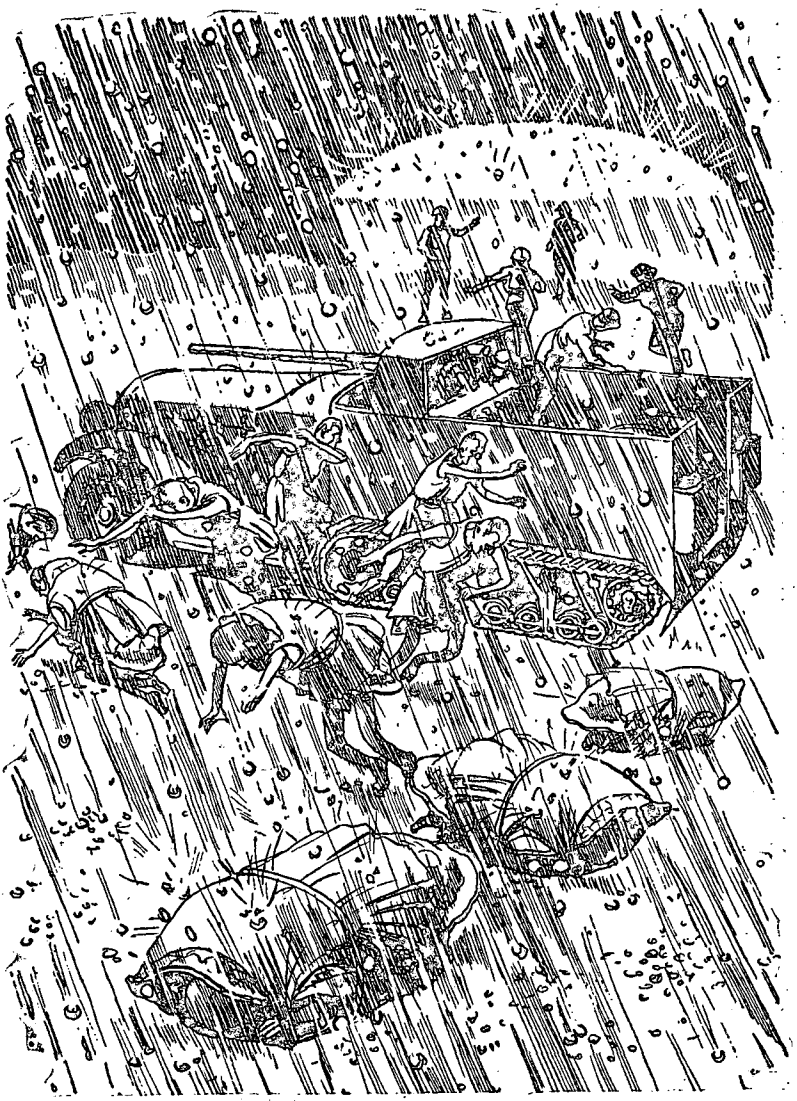

The Teranu hurled themselves to the ground, and drew their heads into their shells, while the Earthmen dashed for the protection of the shield.

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ments of ice as the hail struck and splintered.

The five Earthmen in the medical party ran for the force umbrella, ten feet away. They made it easily—except for the last man, who staggered momentarily before they hauled him under the protective shield.

Boudet watched Doc Parente staunch the flow of blood from the man's head, those big hands of his—with the coarse growth of black bristles—suddenly gentle as he applied a pressure bandage. One of the men beside Parente pointed upward at the barrage of hail that pelted the force umbrella, his eyes wide in astonishment.

The permaglas canopy above Boudet's head cracked alarmingly under the impact of the pellets of ice. The sky through the canopy was a dirty brick red, laced with racing streaks of white. It seemed, as he looked up, as if all of the white lines of racing hail were converging on his position and he felt an irrational impulse to crouch before the assault. It was a dizzying sensation, staring upward...like looking into the raging cone of a whirlpool that threatened momentarily to swallow you up.

And, as quickly as the storm had begun, it ended.

THE LINE of demarcation was so sharp that Boudet could see it rush downward upon him. On one side, there was the dazzling streaks of white; on the other, nothing but the faintest mist of evaporating rain.

He looked out over the sands below and watched the curtain of ice sweep away swiftly toward the low afternoon sun, the hail lashing the desert with its violence.

Then everything was quite still.

What was the Teranu poem? he wondered—the one that went:

> How silent the night before
> the fall-of-stones.
> We wondered at the loss
> Of our hour of quiet,
> Awaiting its return.

Of course, that didn't come out right. There was the simple problem of translating a word like "alusan" as "quiet"

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when it meant a great deal more: repose, introspection, a sort of thoughtful reverie. And how did you handle the more complex problem of the Teranu alliterative poetic forms. You couldn't use the same devices in the English translation. They sounded s i l l y and...

The Teranu guides were lining up again as the medical party gathered its abandoned equipment and inactivated the force umbrella. He saw Parente gesture at the man with the bandaged head, and the man started walking toward one of the half-tracks to the rear of the command machine.

A HATCH clanged somewhere below, followed by the sound of boots on the metal ladder leading to the command deck. Major Kelvin's beefy red face appeared in the deck trap.

"D a m n e d unpredictable mudhole," the major snorted as he brushed damp sand from the knees of his red uniform trousers. "They can give the whole Carmody system back to the gooks as far as I'm concerned."

Boudet inspected the man with distaste from the corner of his eye.

"Start your engines, Lieutenant," the major ordered. "They'll be finished shooting the gooks in another minute."

Boudet pressed the starter button, and below the alcohol motors snarled, caught, and purred softly. He pressed the "to stations" signal and heard the faint beep below, followed by the scuffing of boot leather as the two turret gunners took their positions. A moment later, Sergeant Gorman pulled himself through the deck hatch and, at a nod from Boudet, took his station at the radar post.

"All right," Major Kelvin's crisp voice said—"give those babies outside a 'to stations'."

AS THE OUTSIDE signal sounded, Boudet watched the party dissolve toward the the other half-tracks. The natives followed slowly, their o d d l y-articulated humanoid bodies swinging with a weird grace over the sand. The one assigned to the command vehicle paused at its base, found

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hand-holds and climbed to the padded saddle next to the port turret. As soon as he had strapped himself to the saddle, he waved to Boudet.

Funny, Boudet thought, this racial claustrophobia of the Teranu. You could never get them under a solid roof. Even their own buildings were open to the sky, with only thin roofs of lacquered paper that rolled back each morning. Of course, the devastating hailstorms made any sort of roof except a very massive one impractical.

He waved back at the guide and the Teranu grinned awkwardly. The human expression seemed oddly out of place in the broad flat-nosed features.

The "all-clear" lights on the board glowed as the three half-tracks and the fueler to their rear reported in.

"Half speed ahead," the major said and grabbed for the support of the ladder where it protruded through the deck hatch.

Boudet released the brake, and the vehicle started with a jolt, swaying heavily across the sand. He could hear the hard gritty spray from the front wheels strike the undercarriage far below as the alcohol motors took on a deeper note of effort. It was a pity, he thought, that they were restricted to internal combustion engines on Carmody II; but Earth maintained only two small stations on the planet, and cargo space was too limited for any sort of processed fuel from one of the other colonies. They were perforce reduced to fermenting native wood pulps for most of their fuel.

IT WAS ALMOST sunset when the murky overcast finally broke. Clear desert air suddenly glowed with the deep vermillion of the setting sun and, miles ahead, the mist that was the last reminder of the hail storm began to dissolve. Through the dissolving mists the distant blue forms of the mountains that were their destination appeared.

"You can see the range now," he told the major.

The man looked up from his position in the gimbaled chair where he had been sitting and then made his way to Boudet's side.

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"We'll try to make it to the foothills by nightfall," he said.

"Do you think that's wise?" Boudet asked.

"Why not?"

"Well, sir," Boudet said after a pause. "We don't know what Bartok's been up to since he escaped from Meadowville. Out here we can bed down for the night without too much fear of attack."

"Lieutenant," the major said patiently, "the biggest problem that we colonials have is steering a course between the safe and the dignified. Most of the races we've met set a fantastic value on 'face.' Now we wouldn't want to look as if we were afraid of our shadows, would we?"

"No sir," Boudet said, coloring angrily at his tone.

"Besides," the major said, "we won't actually camp at the foot of the mountains. I don't relish any snipers or stone-rolling fanatics myself. We've got enough trouble on our hands, just bringing Bartok back alive, without starting a miniature war."

The question is, Boudet thought, *how well has Bartok succeeded? "Miniature" might be the wrong adjective for the trouble we're riding into.*

II

THEY WERE still almost an hour's journey from the mountains when Major Kelvin gave the signal to stop for refueling. Early dusk was already upon them and Boudet, noticing that his fuel gauges still registered a quarter of a tank, wondered why they didn't continue to the camp site for the night.

"Refueling," the major answered his unspoken question, "is a dangerous operation when you're under direct enemy surveillance. Best you pick the time and place rather than wait until you need the fuel. We've good visibility still and we're in little danger of attack. We'll be nearly dry by the time we reach the mountains, and then we're in territory where we're more vulnerable."

Boudet dogged the tracks of the command vehicle and watched as the shadows of the other vehicles began to move up in the half-darkness, the

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heavy fueler entering the circle formed by his vehicle and the other three combat half-tracks. After a moment, soft lights glowed on the side of the fueler and the dark shapes of men made ordered confusion in the space below its bulk.

BOUDET made his way down the ladder to the engine deck, nodding at the dark shape of one of the gunners who looked from his turret at the noise. Then he pulled his body through the side hatch and dropped lightly to the ground.

He had no duties as the major's executive officer during the refueling, but he felt he needed the air. The evening was cold and as he watched the men unreel the heavy fuel lines to the half-tracks, he saw that the dusk had already perceptibly deepened.

A dark shape approached his position, and he saw that it was Doc Parente. He gave the medical officer a casual salute and said, "Evening, Doc."

"Evening," came Parente's heavy rumbling voice. "Where's His Nibs?"

"Up on deck with the radar watch. Jumping at every shadow."

Parente leaned back against the metal side of the half-track, extracted his weathered pipe, and flamed it with a tiny jet lighter. Boudet's nose wrinkled at the pungent smoke.

"Look, youngster," Parente said softly, "don't undersell the Old Man. The last thing in the world you can call him is a coward."

"You know we've nothing to worry about from the Teranu. They're one of the most peaceful..."

PARENTE nodded. "By themselves, yes."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning that we don't know what Bartok has filled their heads with."

"Uh, uh, you can't change a racial characteristic overnight," Boudet objected.

"You're that much of an expert on the Teranu?"

"No, but I've studied them."

"So has His Nibs," said Parente. "I told you, don't underestimate him."

"His Nibs is a little tin soldier with all the trappings."

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"I suppose," Parente laughed— a deep rumble that faded into the night. "I should give you some sort of dressing-down about disrespect for a superior officer."

"But you won't, though," Boudet said.

"No—but not for the reason you think. The major has as much understanding, and appreciation of, and compassion for the natives as you claim to have. But that's something you'll have to realize in your own good time."

"Him and his Earthman supremacy? Don't make me laugh."

THEY STOOD for a moment in silence, Parente sucking noisily on his pipe. Once the flame of his lighter glowed briefly. "Can't keep the damned thing lighted in this dampness," he said. Then, "You went to school with him, I understand."

"Bartok? That's right. The Academy."

"What sort of a person was he?"

"Then?" Boudet frowned in thought. "Oh, I don't know. Moody, sometimes. Sometimes wild and unpredictable. He'd have made a good combat officer. He took chances, you know, but he was careful about it."

"That doesn't sound like the man who shot the commissioner in Meadowville."

"That I don't know—he could have his crazy moments. I remember he got into a fight once with one of the cadets who was bragging about how he cribbed on an exam. Funny sort of thing to fight about. I asked him later why he didn't report it, if he felt so strong about it. You know the honor system at the Academy. No one would have blamed him. But he said no, it was a personal thing with him—something he had to handle himself."

"Took the burdens of the world pretty seriously," Parente suggested. "Maybe he'll listen to reason, though."

"From the Old Man? I don't know. If it were just him alone, he'd come back. It's the sort of Quixotic gesture he'd make, giving himself up with a fanfare. Ordinarily I don't

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think he'd have to run in the first place, but. . ."

"But what?"

"The Teranu. He spent lots of time out on the plains in their village. You know, he was writing a book? Translations of Teranu philosophy."

PARENTE said slowly, "That's strange. Funny when a Terran starts to go native. You get one hell of a mess. Like the shooting of the commissioner. . ."

"Well, we never did get the full tale of that."

The sharp beep of the *"to stations"* sounded suddenly.

"Damn," Parente said, and broke from the side of the half-track in a choppy run.

"Native force approaching from right front," Major Kelvin's voice blared from the external speakers. "All men to stations. Lieutenant Boudet up here on the double."

Boudet scrambled through the dark hatch and into the half-track. The men in the side gun turrets made shuffling sounds in the dark, and he heard the soft whine of electric motors as gun mounts turned on oiled bearings to face the front.

He reached the base of the ladder to the command deck and saw the heavy bulk of a man descending. "That you, Boudet?" Major Kelvin's voice asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Cover me on deck. Looks like a parlay from the infra-red pickup. Keep a gun on me while I talk to them. If they try anything funny, shoot first and worry about me afterwards."

As he started up the ladder, the major yelled, "And keep an eye on those gook guides. They may get ideas."

BOUDET found Sergeant Gorman crouched over the double screens of the ground radar and the infra-red pickup. On the radar screen, he could see a small group of dots approaching the central larger pip that marked their position. The i-r screen showed a group of mounted Teranu approaching slowly, a flag waving above the head of the leading rider. As he watched, the flag fluttered for a moment and he saw the simple bold ideograph for *"peace"*

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painted across the cloth.

He called the other half-tracks quickly and gave orders to keep the guides under surveilliance with the i-r equipment. Then he turned his attention back to the screen as the mounted group drew closer.

There were four in the party and they were mounted on Koals—the lean dog-like beasts that were universally used on Carmody II for riding, and as beasts of burden. These animals, however, were thinner, with longer legs and abbreviated carapaces that told of a strain, bred for speed and endurance.

The riders drew up and the leader dismounted. The major, and one of the guides, suddenly appeared from the blind spot below the i-r pickup and approached to meet the Teranu. They stood for several seconds, eyeing each other silently.

Then the Teranu began to speak slowly, moving his hands expressively. The guide said something to the major, apparently translating. For seconds more nothing happened; then the major shook his head vigorously.

THE TERANU, his white robes swirling about his body in the night breeze, seemed to grow an inch taller. As the major started to turn, the Teranu sprang toward him, his hand upraised.

The native guide fell to the ground as flame spurted from the major's fist.

The riders were suddenly spurring their mounts forward.

Below Boudet, the machine guns were firing, their shrill chatter throwing a curtain of twenty caliber slugs across the space before them.

Boudet had time to see the major hit the ground beside the guide; then the sand in front of him churned into a marching spray that raced toward the charging riders and passed over them.

In its wake, the mounted Teranu became a tangled heap of thrashing animals and dying natives.

III

FOR AN INSANE instant Boudet thought he could hear the screams of the dying Teranu, even on the control deck. The ancient

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poem, the one Bartok had been so fond of quoting, flashed crazily through his mind:

> It is the vessel of my father-before-me,
> With his blood infused
> And mine
> And yet my sons
> That I hold while the Ryal Reeds whisper,
> "Will we ever die?"

Then he was shouting into the communicator. "Captain Parente, the major's down. Can you get out to him? We'll cover you if any of them are faking."

He watched a group of three men, Parente in the lead, scurry across the sand to pause beside the major and the guide. After a moment he saw the major stagger to his feet and lean against the bear-like figure of the medical officer. A short while later, he heard the sounds of steps on the deck below and he hurried to help them up to the deck.

"Just winged, damn it," the major panted. "Don't look so green, Boudet. You'll see worse than this before your tour is over."

HE SAT DOWN on the floor and leaned his head forward between his legs as Parente carefully ripped away his sleeve. A long slash down his left bicep was steadily oozing blood.

"Just a flesh wound," Parente grunted as he began to apply a dressing from the kit he carried. When he had finished, Major Kelvin sat up and said. "Did you get the bastards?"

His eyes were cold and emotionless.

"Yes sir," Boudet said, feeling sick, "every one of them."

"Good," the major said. He winced as he tried his bandaged arm. "Good thing the gooks don't know how to use a knife."

Then he was all business. "Get a burial party out," he ordered. "And tell the guides to forget about this."

Boudet felt his throat grow tight. For a moment he had thought the Old Man might be showing some sign of decency, but he realized that it was simply sound tactics to conceal the bodies. That would keep the mountain people wondering if their men had lost themselves in the desert.

Cold-blooded martinet, he thought.

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BOUDET recruited a burial party from among the guides and did what had to be done while the vehicles finished their refueling in the dark. Twenty minutes later, he was again on the control bridge of the major's half-track, guiding the machine through the darkness toward the distant invisible mountains.

Captain Parente had stayed in the lead vehicle to talk to the major and give him a sedative.

"Were they from Bartok?" he asked the major.

"Uh, huh," the major nodded. "Wanted us to turn back."

"How did he know we were coming for him?"

"I guess he expected it. He offered to give himself up within three months if we'd turn back."

The major snorted. "Three months while he trained the gooks, taught them how to fight. Fat chance."

"I don't understand it," Parente said. "The Teranu are the most peace-loving people we've ever met."

"Any people will fight to save their homes," Boudet said from the controls and then tensed, mentally kicking himself for the outburst.

PARENTE stepped into the breech quickly. "No," he said quickly, "they have a complete tradition of non-violence. Their whole philosophy is one of living with nature rather than fighting it. That sort of approach just doesn't breed fighters."

"Maybe you think those gooks back there wanted to play patty-cake?" the major asked drily.

They rode in silence for the rest of the hours, the major dozing on a pallet on the floor which Parente had spread for him, until Gorman at the radar post announced that the base of the mountains was a bare half mile away.

"We'll bed down here for the night," the major decided when Parente awakened him. "Lieutenant, I want a three shift radar and i-r watch. Better post two sentries outside in case something sneaks past our blind spot. Usual detector reinforcement pattern."

Boudet gave orders for the

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four vehicles to draw in, the three combat craft encircling the fueler, noses outward and circles of detection overlapping. Then he secured his bedroll from a locker in the floor, and followed the major and Parente below.

He found that he couldn't sleep. The image of those three riders falling before the machine guns, like ripe wheat before a scythe, haunted him. He still imagined that he heard their cries of pain, although he told himself that this was foolish—that they were undoubtedly dead even before they had touched the ground.

FINALLY, he unzipped the bedroll and sat up. In the darkness, he could hear Parente's labored snores and near him the lighter breathing of the major. The gunners had unrolled their beds near the turret entrances, and he tried to avoid their sleeping forms as he undogged the hatch and climbed out into the night air. He stood for a long time, leaning against the cold metal wall of the half-track, smoking and thinking.

Occasionally, he heard the soft scuff of leather on sand as one of the sentries made his rounds.

The thing, he realized, that bothered him most was that last image before the guns had fired. The upraised hand of the Teranu messenger. And then the blast from the major's sidearm. He realized that none of them had seen anything menacing beyond the upraised arm of the native. No knife, as the major had claimed; not even a gleam of metal.

And there had been no sign of a fallen weapon when he had supervised the burial detail. Of course, it had been dark, and the mounted men had carried the intricately etched ceremonial knives of the Teranu but...the native who had talked to the major had carried no knife and there had been no sign of a weapon near the body.

He felt a little sick then. Had the Old Man deliberately shot the native down, or had he misinterpreted the gesture of the upraised hand? No, the Old Man wasn't one to go off half-cocked. He usually knew what he was doing.

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Which meant...

BUT WHY? It didn't make sense. Except for that open contempt of the major's for the natives. Perhaps to incite them into some organized show of violence. After all, careers and reputations had been made before in police actions on colonial planets.

At that moment, Boudet felt ashamed, horribly ashamed of being a man.

He turned and walked from the half-track, only dimly aware of his intentions. The two sentries were some distance from him. One turned and started toward him, but he said something reassuring, not even caring what his voice said.

After that he kept walking, feeling the hard grit of the desert sand under his feet.

He must have walked for an hour in the darkness before the character of the ground under his boots changed. He began to stumble occasionally on protruding rocks, but he was too tired to even notice. He realized that he was being quite foolish, going out this way without any protection. A sudden hailstorm of the type they had encountered that day could easily leave him a bleeding, beaten thing with no one within call to aid him.

But the thought of the major, and what he had done, only made Boudet walk faster.

He didn't realize that there was anyone within miles until the last instant. Then arms encircled him from behind and a press of bodies bore him to the hard ground.

He felt the coldness of steel pressing into his throat.

IV

HE DIDN'T struggle as they tied his hands and pulled him to his feet. From a few soft words that he heard, Boudet knew that they were Teranu. They were quite silent as they pushed him ahead of them. He began to walk again, not speaking.

Their passage up the mountain slope was a dimly-remembered thing. He had a jumbled impression of rock walls towering on either side, but the road that they took was com-

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paratively broad and not too rocky for his feet. He could tell that the pass was ascending steeply and that it was wide enough to allow perhaps a dozen men abreast to pass, but he lost all sense of direction.

When the ground again leveled, he was too tired to really care. It wasn't a physical tiredness, exactly. He felt rather emotionally drained—as if he had been crying or laughing for an endless period.

He knew from the occasional glint of light that they had entered a village area, but he couldn't make out the buildings except as dim squat shapes that occasionally occulted the stars on the horizon.

They led him to a small building and pushed him inside. He sank to the woven floor and waited, trying to work circulation back into his bound hands by wiggling the fingers. Quite without intending, he dozed.

HE WAS AWAKENED by a hand, shaking his shoulder. For a moment he thought he was still in the half-track and he sat up quickly, sleep blearing his eyes as he tried to gain some semblance of alertness. Then his eyes focused on the native standing over him.

The Teranu wore a short kilted affair of bright scarlet with a thin black piping along the skirt hem. His short-cropped hair had been plastered to his oblong head with some shiny material, so that his face looked lacquered and even more inhuman than the usual Teranu face.

A beam of rusty light from the morning sun illuminated the severe interior of the room. Boudet saw that the varnished paper panels that normally divided a Teranu interior had been folded into their wall recesses but that the parchment roof was still in place. The room was typically Teranu to the woven rush mats that blanketed the floor.

His inspection was cut short by a heavy body blocking the light from the doorway. The red-kilted Teranu drew aside.

"Good morning, Howie," a thin voice said. "I hope you slept well."

He tried to sound as casual. "Morning, Bart," he told

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Bartok. "The floor was a little hard but I was too pooped to notice."

BARTOK said something in Teranu, and the native produced a small, square-bladed knife and cut the fibers binding his wrists. He sat up and tried to rub circulation back into his hands.

"Sorry about that," Bartok said. "I'd have been here earlier if I had known. You know, you took a hell of a chance, coming up on us in the dark like that."

Boudet shrugged and got to his feet.

"It seemed the right thing to do at the time," he said.

He followed Bartok out into the cool morning air. The scarlet-clad Teranu brought up the rear.

"I'd have preferred meeting under more pleasant circumstances," Bartok said.

They walked down a tamped earth street that arrowed between the fragile houses of the village. At the far end of the street, Boudet saw the massive timbers of a Ryal wood shrine. A small plot of grass and a circle of clipped bushes surrounded it, setting it apart from the village street. Only it, of all the structures in sight, seemed at all permanent.

They passed several Teranu, but no one paid them any attention. Boudet had expected some sort of deference to Bartok but the man didn't seem to notice the omission.

"I suppose you were sent up here to bring me back," Bartok said.

BOUDET inspected him from the corner of his eye. He seemed thinner than the last time Boudet had seen him, almost emaciated. Of course, Bartok had always been the wiry type, lean and sinewy with the kind of nervous energy that would not allow him to remain still in one spot for very long. Still, he looked very tired and much older than his years.

"No," Boudet said. "No, I didn't come for that."

"As you wish. It wouldn't do you any good if you had."

Bartok paused and eyed him wearily. "Understand, Howie, I like you very much. I always

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have, but even you couldn't do that."

Bartok waved his hand. "Oh, I'm not afraid about the commissioner affair. I'll face up to that when the time comes but..."

"But the time hasn't come yet?" Boudet asked.

"No, not yet."

"What *did* happen in Meadowville?"

"Probably pretty much what you heard. I killed him, if that's what you mean."

"Partly."

"The other part being why? The same thing you've seen time and again. The blustering colonial official, pushing native trash around. I was staying with one of the Teranu families. He came through with an inoculation team, said that the Teranu were being moved."

BARTOK'S voice became cold and tense. "Imagine. They'd lived in that spot for a thousand generations, for a time longer than Earth's whole recorded history."

"I understand that the move was dictated by the Colonial Health Office," Boudet said, "to move them outside of the range of infection from the Earth settlement. After all, you can't inoculate a whole town for every one of the Earthman's diseases."

"That makes no matter," Bartok said. "We're the ones who should have moved."

"But the Commissioner?"

"I'm not sorry about that. It was an accident, a struggle with a gun. But I'm not sorry —the dirty little racial snob got just what he deserved."

They walked for some seconds in silence.

"Look, Howie," Bartok said. "Why did you come up here?"

"I'm not sure." Boudet shrugged. "Not to take you back, though." He told Bartok of the tribesmen who had been machine-gunned on the desert.

A tiny muscle clenched in Bartok's jaw as he heard the story. "I meant it, you know," Bartok said. "About giving myself up at the end of three months."

"It sounded like you."

"Thanks, Howie." Bartok placed a hand on Boudet's arm. "Thanks a lot."

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BARTOK left him in a small area of trees and shrubs to the left of the shrine.

"I'll see you in an hour," he explained. "Your arrival brings up certain problems. I think you'll like it out here in the open better than in the place I found you."

As he walked away, Boudet marveled again at how thin and tired he seemed.

And somehow tragic.

The Teranu in the red tunic seated himself on his haunches behind Boudet. When Boudet turned and smiled uncertainly, the native eyed him coldly, without expression.

The tempo of activity in the village increased as the day grew older. There were dozens of small groups engaged in various activities down the length of the street, and occasionally several nobles in bright costumes passed within earshot. They paid him no notice, seeming deliberately to avoid admitting that he was there. Several, he saw, were wearing ceremonial daggers, such as he had seen in the museum in Meadowville. They were light, easily-broken pieces with intricately lacquered and inlaid blades, designed more for beauty than utility.

When Bartok returned, he said, "Your major has pulled up at the base of our pass. He hasn't made a move since. Probably he'll try to starve us out."

"I don't think so," Boudet said. "His food and fuel supply is limited."

BARTOK said, "He may succeed anyway," and motioned Boudet to follow him. They took an angled course from the shrine, the Teranu in the red tunic following close behind.

"They don't exactly trust me where you're concerned," Bartok observed when he saw Boudet look at their shadow. "Blood and water, I suppose—or the Teranu equivalent."

They stopped by a long low structure of heavy timbers. The solidity of the structure contrasted oddly with the more fragile buildings on either side.

When Boudet started to enter, Bartok placed a restraining hand on his shoulder. "No—you can see what you want from here."

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The interior of the single room was punctuated by the massive timbers that supported the heavy roof. Boudet had never seen a Teranu building before, except for a shrine, whose roof was designed to withstand the autumnal hails and for a moment he was so engrossed in the construction that he didn't realize the significance of the white pallets crowding the floor nor of the silent figures on them.

Then he realized what it was. A hospital.

"Measles," Bartok said. "Plain, ordinary measles. The sort of thing we call a kid's disease. But without antitoxin, it's killing us slowly but surely."

V

BARTOK SAID, "So you see we can't outwait your major."

"Look," Boudet suggested, "they have vaccine in the half-tracks. Kelvin wouldn't let the whole village die off."

"Wouldn't he? And what would he expect in return? Howie, it's not *my* life I'm worrying about. If these people ever realize that I brought this with me when I came... well, I'd have to save face—and you know what that means."

"But you've got to do something."

"Something? Yes, we'll do something. We'll fight. For the first time in her fat, greedy history, Earth will have to fight to hold a colony. She won't be able to swallow us up and digest us at her leisure."

He was silent for a moment as if lost in thought. Then, "Did you ever see what we did on Virago?"

"I've been there," Boudet admitted.

"Whole native cities deserted, decaying. Others torn apart, the buildings converted to pressurized huts for the Earthmen to live in. But that's not the really bad part. The people of Virago had one of the most complex cultures we've ever seen, and an art that's irreplaceable. So, now they've sold all that for a mess of pottage—for the kind of pottage we specialize in. Shiny new tractors and cheap cloth and packaged foods and the

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same sort of ulcer-breeding environment you'll find on a thousand planets between here and Sol.

"Sure, we brought measles and mumps and pneumonias of a dozen kinds—but we brought a contagion a lot more deadly, the rawness and the dirt of being men, all the blood lust and the complete contempt for the individual that has marked our whole history."

BARTOK'S face had become flushed and his eyes were narrow and intent as he talked. He laughed self-consciously.

"I'm sorry, Howie. It's just that I get pretty wound up on this. The Teranu have a recorded history stretching back ten thousand years before the Great Wall of China was built on Earth. You've studied their culture, their philosophy, their art. Nothing like that could ever originate on Earth. It's incomparably superior to anything of ours. It makes us look like the ragged barbarians we are. And, God willing, this is one people that won't be converted into another parrot species, trying to imitate the cheap mechanical glamour of Earth."

"And, in the meantime," Boudet said, "Major Kelvin is camped below, waiting. What about him?"

"I told you, we'll fight."

"What with?"

"With our hands, if we have to. With those."

HE POINTED toward two Teranu who were bearing a device like a litter between them and motioned them closer. There was a light canvas thrown over the litter and Bartok pulled it up.

What was underneath was very crude, the sort of thing you'd make on a primitive forge. The barrels were quite smooth inside; they were obviously meant to be muzzle-loaded.

"And each day," Bartok said proudly, "we'll have more."

"You can't fight off half-tracks and machine-guns and tanks with muskets."

"How many Earthmen are there on Carmody?"

"Maybe ten thousand," Boudet said.

"And there are well over six-

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ty million Teranu. If necessary, we can lose a hundred to each Earthman. But we will win. We'll smother Kelvin and the people like him under a sea of bodies."

He gestured for the two Teranu to continue on their way.

"And Kelvin?" Boudet insisted.

"He knows the value of saving face. I know how to get him out of his metal shell." Bartok laughed. "When I left you, I sent him a message. I told him I wanted to parlay. I accused him of being afraid, of hiding in his half-tracks. He'll come now. He has to or lose face."

"And," Boudet said, "the road isn't big enough for any vehicle. He'll have to come on foot."

"Which is exactly what I want."

VI

BARTOK spent the rest of the morning and the early afternoon in feverish preparation for the coming of Major Kelvin. He left Boudet in charge of the same impassive Teranu in the red tunic. Several times Boudet tried to start a conversation with him, but the guard knew no English and Boudet could catch only a few words of the dialect that he spoke. He gathered that the native was not a person of little importance by the deference paid him by several of the villagers who at various times addressed him.

When Bartok appeared at noon with canned rations, Boudet asked him about it.

"Oh," Bartok said, "he's a sort of village magistrate, charged with carrying out punishment. You're a friend of mine and they couldn't assign just anyone to be with you without causing me to lose face."

During the course of the hurried meal, Boudet tried to pump Bartok on his plans but the man was evasive. Boudet finally decided that he had some plan in mind to hold Kelvin hostage. He wondered if Bartok really thought he could get away with it. Certainly the authorities in Mead-

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owville wouldn't allow Kelvin to remain a prisoner for long. How they would react bothered him; and for the first time he recognized the anomaly of his position. Bartok had automatically assumed that he was in sympathy with the Teranu and Bartok's plans for them.

IN TRUTH, Boudet was not sure of where he stood. He had bolted after the evidence of the major's brutality, but the thought of siding with the Teranu in any revolt against colonial authority was equally distasteful. Not that he couldn't appreciate Bartok's motives—but he saw that, in spite of all his help, Bartok was still an outsider to the Teranu—as much so as Boudet himself. There was little left to him or Bartok, he realized, regardless of the outcome of today's plan. They would be disowned by their own people and still just barely tolerated by the Teranu.

He spent the early afternoon, after Bartok had left, in the house where he had awakened. He tried to catch a nap but the roof had been rolled back and the dull light of the afternoon sun, while not warm, made it impossible to sleep.

He decided to find Bartok.

HE LEFT, followed by the silent guard. He found Bartok standing near the shrine at the head of the street.

"Getting restless, Howie?" Bartok greeted him.

"What about Kelvin?"

"He's coming. Come along with me."

Boudet followed him from the street, through a grassed plot, and out toward a cut in the rock table upon which the village was built. Without being told, he surmised that the cut marked the road that led up from the base of the mountain.

Bartok led the way along the rocky ground to a ledge that jutted out over the trail below. For the first time, Boudet realized how high they were, and how inaccessible the village was except by the one road.

"There's an interesting history behind this ledge," Bar-

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tok said as he looked out over the edge and followed the road with his eyes until it was lost in the underbrush far down the mountain.

"The Teranu call this the Place of Honor. When a man has lost face before the whole village and there's no other way to regain honor, he walks to the edge and..."

He spread his hands.

"Of course, if he doesn't have the courage, the magistrate—in this case your guard—helps him."

Boudet turned and eyed the impassive Teranu. "It's not a pretty way to die."

"But it is. It's clean and it's one sure way of redeeming yourself."

"It's a rather ironic thought," Bartok added. "The Place of Honor gives a clear view of the trail below and..."

He pointed to the tiny dots that formed far below and began to mount the trail slowly.

"You see," Bartok laughed, "I knew he had to come."

THERE WAS no doubt of it. The group had to be Earthmen. The Teranu would never have preserved that formation. Boudet could barely make out their figures, but he saw that several were carrying some sort of heavy equipment. Probably the force screen, he realized. It was getting late, and the hailstorms during this season usually came in the late afternoon.

They stood, watching the group ascend. The road was quite steep and, except for several ragged turns, essentially straight.

"They'll pass through the cut below," Bartok said.

Teranu were beginning to gather behind them, and Boudet noticed that they were all carrying muskets.

"This is the test, our test," Bartok laughed. "Look."

He pointed across the cut through which the trail knifed its last thousand yards. For a moment, Boudet thought that they were merely mounds of Earth, overgrown with coarse vegetation. Then he realized that there was something else. He saw a flash of color amid the branches.

"Rocks," Bartok hissed. "A whole mass of rock held by a

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retaining frame. Knock out the props and the mass avalanches into the cut."

Boudet looked at him in horror.

"Bart," Boudet said, grabbing the man by the arm. "They're your own people."

Bartok shook off his hand. "These are my people," he said. "My God, Howie, how we've slaughtered in our rise to power. This is only turnabout."

THE MEN were approaching the area where the rock walls of the cut towered above them. In another five minutes they would be in the trap.

"Bart," he yelled. "What about the men you sent. They were supposed to kill the major, weren't they?"

"It was a stupid move, I know," Bartok said. "I couldn't think of anything else at the moment. He came before I was ready."

Boudet stared at him in disbelief. It was all there, he saw ...completely in character. The exaggerated code of behavior that could justify any action, the whole sordid reaction pattern that a hundred other high-minded champions had played out in the past. He must have been mad even to consider...

Boudet turned and lunged for one of the Teranu behind him. Before the native could recover, he had the clumsy musket in his hands.

He heard Bartok yell and then he fired.

Not at Bartok—it took all of his control to master that impulse—but into the air.

IN THE NEXT instant Bartok was upon him, his bony fists pounding into Boudet's face. "I'll kill you myself for that," Bartok yelled.

And then the Teranu were pulling him off, their faces cold and without emotion.

Bartok said something and hands grabbed Boudet, pulling him to his feet. Far below, the men had stopped and were looking upward. Boudet thought, *Pray God, Kelvin has his binoculars.*

The seconds lengthened and then the body of men started to move forward again. Boudet opened his mouth to shout and a rough hand slapped across his face.

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The men were directly below now, trapped between the sheer rock walls. Bartok was raising his hand in signal.

"Bartok!" The noise was like thunder, echoing up from the train. Boudet realized that they must have brought an electric megaphone along.

"Bartok," Major Kelvin's voice called again.

For a moment Bartok hesitated. The Teranu were looking at him...waiting. He stepped to the ledge in view of the men far below.

"Bartok," the Major's voice thundered, *"I stop here. If you want your parlay, come down."*

Bartok stood stiffly for a second. Then his eyes strayed back to the masses of stone, poised above the trail.

"There's no reason to be afraid," the Major's voice said. Then he repeated the words in Teranu.

Suddenly Boudet was laughing. "What now, little man?" he demanded. "How do you save face now?"

BARTOK'S face was a study in shock.

"Honor, my fine-feathered friend," Boudet mocked him. "You've got to go down and join him or you'll lose face. He'll die, but you'll die with him."

Bartok paused in indecision.

"You've lost," Boudet yelled. He felt like sobbing with relief.

"Have I?" Bartok asked, and raised his hand again. "They'll still obey. After that is time enough to worry."

He started to bring the hand down. Boudet saw a flash of color as Teranu appeared amid the branches camouflaging the rocks.

Then...

The sound of the shot was not very loud.

The Teranu, the one who had guarded Boudet through the day, stood holding the smoking musket.

A look of stark disbelief spread slowly over Bartok's face.

It seemed to hang in mid-air... Just like the Cheshire Cat's, Boudet thought insanely ...long after Bartok had plunged over the ledge, long after his body had found its destiny on the sharp rocks below.

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VII

BOUDET stood, watching the village Teranu line up for their innoculations. Major Kelvin had scarcely noticed him since the men had come through the cut. Now he walked across the street and motioned for Boudet to follow him out of earshot of the men.

"I suppose I'm under arrest," Boudet said.

"No," the major replied.

"I should be grateful, I suppose."

"You're a fool," the major said, bitterly. "Maybe you'll grow out of it."

He started to say something else when Parente approached.

"About finished, Major. We'll have to get more vaccine out here, though."

"All right," the major said absently. He looked once at Boudet and then stalked off without a word.

"What happened?" Parente wanted to know.

"Nothing. I expected blood and fire. But nothing."

"You know, he thought a lot of you."

"I bet. Just the way he thought of the natives. He'll be back to the 'dirty gook' routine before the day is out."

"You make me sick," Parente said, slowly and deliberately.

BOUDET looked at him, startled.

"You and everybody like you. The starry-eyed intellectual. You flirt with an alien culture and because it looks pretty to you—because it's strange and old, and it's being pushed aside by what you call crass materialism—it's automatically superior to the home-grown variety."

"Look, I..."

"For once, Lieutenant, shut up and listen. I'm sick of your intellectual snobs. You prate about the inhumanity of man, and treat a gesture like Kelvin's as a sign of weakness. Did you ever stop to think that, of all the races we've met in this universe, only man has space flight, only man has solved his problems of food, that only man has mastered the environment of his home planet?"

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"The Teranu have solved all those. They live with nature."

"Yes, and so do a thousand other races. They bow their collective heads before nature and call it fate. That's what keeps them where they are. . . forever in balance, forever perfect. . . forever static.

"You talk about our bloody history, our killer instinct. My God, where would we be without it? Like the Teranu, like the thousand cow-like races we've met. But we're fighters. We fight each other, sure. But we fight nature. She's the one real implaceable enemy we've always had. If it takes blood, if we destroy, that's part of it. But we build, we've become great in our own right—and we've come a hell of a long way in those years the Teranu were sipping their tea and looking at flower paintings."

PARENTE stopped, his eyes hard. He jabbed a heavy finger into Boudet's chest.

"So, I'm a savage! My culture isn't one that's pretty and nice and ordered. My race comes ready-made with a simple, direct code of ethics. So, I'm a man. I don't bow my head to anyone or anything. I'm a fighter and damned proud of it."

He turned on his heel and started to walk away. The men at the head of the inoculation line were suddenly shouting. For a moment, Boudet didn't understand what they were saying.

Then the light began to dim

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Coming Next Issue

"IONS, PHOTONS, AND CLIPPER SHIPS"

A Definitive Article about the "Race Into Space"

by Thomas N. Scortia

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(*continued from page 23*)

ready for a flight over the South Pole.

And forty-three nations signed the Pact of Paris, renouncing war, while the Hawley-Smoot Tariff fostered the economic despair abroad which would play a large role in preparing the ground for the Great War to come.

—

FOR THE person just coming to science fiction at the time (as I was myself), the three issues we're discussing now (January, February *Amazing Stories;* Winter *Amazing Stories Quarterly*) offered a wealth of amazement indeed. The world is over-run by "The Sixth Glacier" (by the unidentified "Marius"), and few readers were distressed by the author's poetic license:

> . . . And then, like the high prow of some Cyclopean ship, the icy nose of the glacier tore through the storm. Into the residential part of the roar of a thousand the city it tore—with Niagaras, the fury of a thousand miles, and before its might man's handicraft gave way and was crushed and plowed under by the ice.
>
> . . . Somewhere far in the rear, perhaps hundreds of miles behind, a grand upheaval must undoubtedly have taken place and hurled suddenly and unexpectedly upon its wretched victim this pointed mass that was supposed to come in a more leisurely fashion, a huge field of ice that rose in height as it stretched northward, peak after peak, vale after vale, and lost itself in the mist of the falling snow. With the speed of an express train it burst out of the curtain that fell thickly from the massed, gray clouds. The glacier that had so far had advanced so slowly and had behaved so well had suddenly burst its gyves

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and spread rapid destruction in its wake. A second sufficed it to cross the narrow Harlem River and fix itself on the main part of the gigantic city. ...

AMAZING indeed! A "grand upheaval" far in the rear—sufficient to propel the hithertofore "well behaved" glacier onto New York with the speed of an express train—an upheaval which in itself is apparently not felt in New York. The author, through the narrator, isn't sure of what took place; he merely says that this is what must have happened.

Now one way of approaching an amazing event in science fiction is to go at it in reverse. This happened—this is given; now let's find some plausible reason for its happening. It doesn't have to be likely; it just has to be scientifically possible. But here before us is the all-too-frequent flaw in that method. Perhaps a grand upheaval *could* account for a glacier's most unglacierlike behaviour; but can we allow such an upheaval without other, immediate results, too? My guess is that an upheaval of such dimensions to make a glacier come down thereafter upon New York like an express train would send it down upon New York in the aftermath of earthquake; there wouldn't have been any manhattan towers left standing for the glacier to knock over.

But even if I'm wrong about that, I can't imagine such an upheaval taking place without its being noted in New York; there couldn't have been any guessing about it. Seismographs would have left no doubt about the matter.

THOSE WHO started reading the January issue with the first story, however (Harl Vincent's "War of the Planets") were already orientated toward the destruction of cities before they turned to the Marius serial.

> ... Far below them spread the industrial city, with the forms of the **spherical** ships about halfway between. They had huddled together like **billiard** balls set up in equilateral triangle formation. The hulls seemed to contact momentarily.

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As they did, from each there slowly projected a dark object, cylindrical in shape. These objects approached each other in the open space enclosed by the three vessels. They contacted and a blinding blue flame spouted at the point of contact. At this, the three ships rapidly receded from one another, but the arc which had formed between the three electrodes continued, spreading to a huge, sputtering, roaring flame as the distance increased.

...the three enemy ships, still maintaining their triangular formation, receded to three points equally spaced about a circle enclosing the city. Still the terrific arc was maintained between the electrodes. When the outermost limits of the city had been reached, the three vessels started to turn slowly on their vertical axes. This movement continued until the electrodes became tangent to a circle represented by all three, all pointing in the same direction of rotation. The great blue flaming arc now became a whirling vortex, ever curving downward to the doomed city...

THE PROFESSOR identifies this method of destruction as "the atomic storm" and notes that it was produced on a miniature scale in the laboratory as far back as the twentieth century, and in an electric arc, too.

... This was exactly like a Kansas "twister", magnified in intensity a thousand times.

Atomic storms produced by enemy space ships for the hot blooded; glaciers for those who prefer their city-annihilations to come in peace. We lose so many cities that way.

In the February issue, we have a few "firsts": Alexander Phillips made his debut with "The Death of the Moon", the first appearance in science fiction magazines of intelligent aliens from the Moon coming to Earth in prehistoric times, and battling dinosaurs, etc. Paul's cover shows the big, beetle-like creatures turning their ray-guns on Tyranno-

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saurus Rex. A. H. Johnson's "Phagocytes" is a fictionalized account of the battle within a human body, against invading bacteria. Wallace G. West (who had appeared heretofore in *Weird Tales*) also made his debut with "The Last Man", the first tale of the last man alive in a world of women.

BUT IT IS in *Amazing Stories Quarterly* that the first significant story of the year, appeared—and that a reprint. As a story, Hugo Gernsback's "Ralph 124C41+" is primitive and juvenile; as prophetic fiction it is a masterpiece. And while I do not entirely agree with that late Fletcher Pratt that "Ralph" was the first science fiction story ever written, it was certainly the first respectable tale of science-fiction prophecy, scientifically speaking. Remember that this story was written in 1911 and that Mr. Gernsback was speculating only on possibilities developing out of technology that existed in 1911. The number and diversity of speculations which proved to be prophetic is remarkable. As Pratt says, H. G. Wells' stories are not in the same league at all. Wells was a fine writer and "enough of a scientist to use technical terms correctly" but "was afflicted with a low scientific morality where fiction was concerned. He tried to be a prophet in the domain of sociology, but he was really not interested in the progress of physical science. As long as he could get his characters into a situation by means of a plausible-sounding device, he was quite willing to flim-flam the reader about the practicability of the device and the soundness of the principles involved.

"Mr. Gernsback, on the other hand, founded the school of fiction in which the technical plausibility of the surroundings is at least as important as the literary plausibility of the characters."

HERE ARE fundamental reasons why so much that is labelled "science fiction", while admissible in one way or another as science fiction, is nonetheless *bad* science fiction.

Low scientific morality where science is concerned re-

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sults in bad *science* fiction. It may spring from lack of interest in the progress of physical science (which doesn't mean just the science of physics); it may come from hostility to such progress; or it may come from ignorance combined with laziness, or with lack of realization that ignorance is of any importance.

Wells, we have seen, is an example of the first instance. Ray Bradbury is an outstanding example of the second; innumerable pulp writers who turned out readable to good stories (as fiction) can be cited in the third instance, while a writer like Jerry Sohl might be put in the fourth category. And, of course, there are combinations of the four.

Lack of ability, or interest, in literature results in bad science *fiction* when the author shows worthy concern in following the Gernsback tradition. Perhaps some of you can think of authors whose scientific speculations were combined with low literary ability, but whose speculations themselves were as well-disciplined as those of the father of science fiction. Oddly, I can't.

HIGH SCIENTIFIC morality where science is concerned, combined with literary ability, is the basic necessity for good science fiction. But this need not be expressed in the strict Gernsback tradition. It will *resemble* the Gernsback tradition in so far as the author's devices can be considered *possible* in the light of scientific knowledge of the time—are not derived from ignorance of elementary science—even though they do not seem to grow out of present technology.

An example would be where the author invents his own alien planet technology, as in Blish's *"Case of Conscience"*. In this tale, the science covers the manner in which the Lithians solved technical problems and built their civilization; speculation on Christian Theology; advances in Earth's technology; and speculation upon the social consequences of these three elements. The scientific background is full and vivid; and the author's literary skill welds this into a memorable work of fiction. With the possible exception of the C. Day Lewis trilogy,

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nothing has been done like this, to my knowledge, since Robert Hugh Benson's *"Lord of the World"*—and Benson, of course, had no notion of writing science fiction, even though the story was close to science fiction at the time.

FOR THE record, this issue of the quarterly had the first story where a man is artificially evolved into a monster.

> ... Upon a cushion at the far end of the room reposed what looked to me like a phosphorescent tarantula. As I gazed with widened eyes and gaping mouth, I realized that it was not of the spider family at all. The circular, central part was not a body, but rather a head, for from its center glowed two unblinking eyes, and beneath them was the rudiment of a mouth. The appendages which had upon first appearance resembled the legs of the spider, I perceived were fine hair-like tentacles that were continually in motion as if a soft breeze played through them.

This, we soon learn is Ted Marston, lead character in Clare Winger Harris' "The Evolutionary Monstrosity", out to prove his bacteria theory of evolution. It looks as if he did.

In "The Murgatroyd Experiment", Captain S. P. Meek, USA (his initial appearance) tried to solve the food problem by injecting people with superchlorophyll (Murgatroyd's own invention) so that they can get sustenance directly from sunlight. They become plantoid, except that the process corrupts their morals—to say the least!—and we have a horde of carnivorous plant-men on the loose before the story is over. While in the "The Hollister Experiment", Walter Kately avers that proper manipulation of thyroid extract can produce a grasshopper 500 feet high, and begosh it does. And Harl Vincent's "The Seventh Generation" is one of the last stories in science fiction magazines which turn out to be only a dream.

Outside of Editor Gernsback's own novel, the scientific morality wasn't notable in these early 1929 issues. RAWL

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Special Feature

IT'S ME, O LORD

by Alma Hill

Science fiction writers like to dream up new languages. Fine. But you have to understand some of the pitfalls in the language we use, first.

PRONOUNS are very queer things, and here's an example. If you announce yourself by saying, "It's me," you sound childish, because so many rule books call this combination ungrammatical. Yet, who but a bald-faced purist would say, "It's I."? *That* SOUNDS wrong.

There used to be a good old knock-knock story about St. Peter at the Gate. The soul comes knocking and St. Peter says, "Who's there?"

"It is I," says the new voice.

"You can't come in," replies the Guardian, "We have too many schoolteachers here now."

So who loves the Predicate Nominative anyhow? In practice, you hear *neither* "It's me," *nor* "It is I," but, instead, some kind of cowardly compromise, such as naming yourself to your own kin who know your voice, or writing some roundabout thing. You know.

You may say that every common citizen has a right of pocket-veto over the lordly-sounding rule book. It is a kind

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of revision by evasion.

It is quite a demonstration of the futility of passing unwanted rules. In this particular example, the rule books are leaning their weight against the drift of English, rather than with it as they should be doing; and, behold, at once they become ineffective.

The truth is that Predicate Nominatives don't fit naturally in English, and therefore cannot survive outside of ivory towers. So strong is the tendency against it, that the rule books have all they can do to hold the fort with a few pronoun forms, letting all else go with the tide.

What galls me is that, although no respectable grammarian since Jespersen—who died fifteen years ago—has had a kind word for the Predicate Nominative, it is very hard to find an elementary or highschool textbook which does not include it. Teachers all over the country are placed under professonal obligation to puzzle the students' heads with something that the students quite validly feel to be all wrong and therefore incomprehensible within the system.

THE ACTUAL grammatical system in English is very simple. Most children have it by the age of three. They may not be able to explain it to you, of course, but they always use it. Subject, verb, object, in that order; that is the basis of English syntax.

Other languages may have different systems, but right here we are talking about *this* language. There has been, for instance, some confusion with Latin, but almost any comparison will show you the difference right away.

There are three kinds of syntactic systems in Terran language: agglutinative, synthetic, and analytic.

Comparing the synthetic system in Latin with the analytic system in English, you could find examples like the following:

In old Rome they say speak of a tourist, "*"Rosa videt Romam."* — We would say, "Rose is seeing Rome," and mean the same thing; but in order to mean the same thing, we would have to keep it in that order, because an analytic language makes use of separable pieces which will not work

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unless you place them right.

In any synthetic language, arrangement can change nothing but emphasis—the meaning stays the same, because the endings show what is being done, by whom to what, and there you are. You could just as well say," *"Roman videt Rosa,"* or *"Videt Rosa Romam,"* or any other of the six possible combinations, and it would be still the same, so far as the facts went.

NOW YOU can't do that in English. If you said, "Is Rose seeing Rome," the change of arrangement would turn it into a question so thoroughly that, by not writing the question mark, or indicating it by raising the tone on the end word, you would lead people to suppose that you must mean something unusual: Rose must be having a high old time over there. And yet all you did was swap the position of the first two words. In fact, so strongly do we feel this subject-verb-object habit, that we still don't put the whole verb first. Nobody would do that. "Sees Rose Rome?" sounds so archaic that hardly anyone but de Camp would even think of it. Furthermore, if you say, "Rome is seeing Rose," you have completely changed the facts, and people just hope that Rose is beautiful enough to get away with making people stare that way.

It hasn't been done that way forever. Old English, and all the other tongues in the Indo-European complex, including Old Roman—and for all I would know, Old Mu—were inflected, or synthetic languages. Setting up a regular order came gradually to Modern English. But as soon as that was solid, the endings ceased to matter and went out of use. For centuries now there has been no such thing in English as a Nominative or Accusative (when I was a kid we called them Subjective and Objective) case ending, except in those few pronouns—and maybe those would have long gone if a few diehards weren't sitting on them.

A few inflections are still used, but they seem to be going, too. For instance, we spell a word with an "s" on the end if it's plural, and "'s" for

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what we used to call Possessive. Yet we are coming to say "ten fish" in preference to "ten fishes" and "fish eyes" rather than "fishes' eyes". Perhaps in another century all those esses will be as old hat as the "thee" and "thou" business which has gone out—and despite bitter protests by some grammarians, too.

In our day we are having some apparent trouble with "whom", a form which is actually very little used. Generally it comes before a verb where an objective ending sounds wrong, just as a subjective form sounds wrong after a verb. Very few people say anything but "who"; having a good college education just makes it surer. All the authorities back it now.

Could you say, "Whom do you see?" in any company anywhere today without expecting a long, cold, thoughtful stare?

And here we are expected to teach all these false constructions to little folks who knew better before they went to school; and if they can't do it, we must write the bad news on their report cards. It just makes me simmer.

Does it make the small fry simmer too? Do they grow up bothered, bewildered, and bewitched? Did you? If anybody says "grammar" to you, do you hear the music of sweet reason or does a fog roll up?

So then what?

A Mad and Merry Tale of
Times To Come
THERE'S NO PLACE
LIKE SPACE
by Robert Silverberg
is featured in the banner May issue of
SCIENCE FICTION STORIES
on sale at all stands, March 1st

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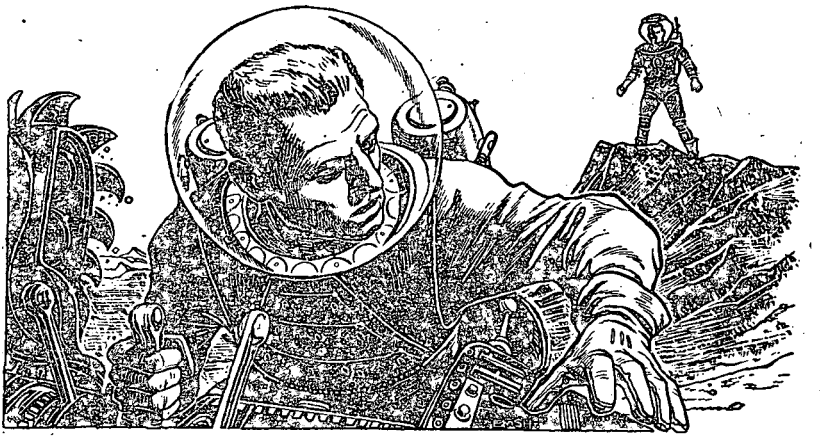

The Renegade

(*continued from page* 100)

before his eyes. His reaction was quite automatic. He started to run for the area staked off for the force field.

In seconds the area was crowded with a tight mass of men as the force canopy went up. The Teranu fell to the ground, pulling the soft parts of their bodies under the protection of their carapaces.

And the hail struck, great sheets of it pounding the prone natives, ripping through the houses along the street, the houses that had no roofs because the hail would destroy them.

Boudet stood silently, watching the pellets of ice pound the street.

It came to him in that instant as he stood, looking out over the backs of the Teranu, cowering before the flail of an impersonal nature, that in the whole street, only the earthmen stood erect. . .

Erect and unafraid.

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protected planet

by Dan Morgan

The only defense that a Ffarin had was suicide — which was perfect so far as their own internal relations went. The man who drove another to self-destruction was damned, while the self-slain were guaranteed paradise in the after-life. It looked like the perfect set-up for an enterprising Earthman, unencumbered with ideals or ethics.

THE FFARIN kept well away from Petrillo after the death of their priest. As he swaggered through the stone city in the warm sunlight, he saw faces hover in the dimness behind open doorways and disappear, but no one attempted to stop him.

Once, rounding a corner, he almost collided with a Ffarin. His hand flew to the gun at his hip, green eyes fluttering in the cage of their sockets like frightened tropical birds. But there was no need. The alien moved aside without a word and Petrillo walked on towards the temple.

He knew the way, although this was his first time on Ffarin. He had dreamed and schemed ten long years for this moment. What he intended to do was not so much a crime as a meticulously-planned business operation in which he had invested a third of a lifetime's effort. There had been the study of astrogation and the handling of a ship; the pinching and scraping—one shady deal after another, always one move ahead of the law—until at last he had accumulated enough capital to buy a small,

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one-man freighter. And now he stood on the threshold of success.

The death of the priest at the landing field had dispelled any small doubts that might have lingered, despite his detailed study and research on Ffarin. The ancient cult of the race was still rigidly observed, thanks to the ETRA ruling which had made it a protected planet. No Earth ship other than the occasional ETRA patrol had landed on Ffarin since its discovery, some fifteen years before. And a careful check had shown that at this moment there was no patrol ship within half a light year of the Ffarin system. The planet lay like some ripe cosmic nut, awaiting the crushing hand of Petrillo to make it yield up its jewelled kernel.

PETRILLO rounded another corner and passed into a narrow, shaded alley. The air was humid, clinging to the nostrils of his high-bridged beak of a nose, and his footsteps soundless in the dust as though he was walking through a pool of molasses. But the discomfort was nothing in the face of the triumphant anticipation that filled his mind.

He was no hero, no man of action, but at this moment he held the entire population of Ffarin in his power, simply by the plain fact of his different cultural background. That difference, plus his own lack of conscience, made him invincible, immune from any retaliation the Ffarin were capable of making.

The Ffarin belief in an elaborate cult of after-life rendered the present, physical existence of little importance to them except as a time of preparation. The most terrible revenge one Ffarin could wreak on another was to take his own life in full sight of his enemy. The teachings of the priest-rulers told him that by doing so he would be placing the soul of his enemy in a state of uncleanness, thus making it unacceptable on the higher plane of existence, and depriving its owner of any chance of an after-life. On the other hand, the one who had killed himself would fly straight into the arms of jewelled god of Ffarin, to live forever in a heaven of unlimited pleasure.

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Petrillo's thin mouth twisted in a smile. He had done the priest at the landing field a favour.

He reached the end of the alley and stepped out into a sunlit square. The place seemed dead and deserted, but he knew that the Ffarin were watching from the square, blind eyes of a hundred windows. He slapped the weapon at his hip and walked towards the shining white bulk of the temple, puffing out his small chest like some strutting rooster. Nothing could stop him now.

THE MAIN door lay open, waiting. Petrillo passed through, without hesitation. The air inside was even heavier than that of the streets, tainted with the sickly sweetness of incense. The floor and walls were white stone, bare of any ornamentation. This was the outer hall of the temple, where the common people gathered daily to worship. The beaten brass door leading to the inner temple lay ahead of him, guarded by a big, magnificently muscled Ffarin.

The guard held a jewelled ceremonial knife in his right hand, point downwards. His eyes, deep brown, flecked with yellow, were on Petrillo, unblinking.

The corner of Petrillo's mouth twitched. What if he had been mistaken, and there was some special dispensation for the servants of the temple? He drew his gun and stopped warily a few feet from the guard. "Let me past," he commanded.

The guard held his position squarely in the center of the doorway. "No one shall enter the inner temple of Ffarin unless called there by the high priest himself. It is forbidden by the ancient law."

"How will you stop me?" asked Petrillo.

"I shall give my life, if that be needed," said the guard, simply.

"Then I must offer the same." Petrillo checked the safety catch on his gun, raised it to his temple and began to squeeze the trigger, as he had in the encounter with the priest. These savages knew enough of guns to realize that they were weapons capable of killing; but the function of a

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safety catch was beyond them.

THE EYES of the Ffarin guard dilated with fear, assuming that his soul was in immediate danger of defilement. Reaching out his right arm to its fullest extent, he paused for a brief moment in silent prayer, then plunged the razor-sharpened tip of the ceremonial knife into his own breast. He slumped to the ground with a hiss of pain.

Petrillo stepped back nimbly to avoid the falling body and lowered the gun from his head. Wiping the sweat from his pale brow he stepped delicately over the dying guard and pushed open the door.

Beyond lay the inner temple of the priest rulers of Ffarin, a great vaulted chamber of over fifty yards in length. Sunlight playing through the gorgeously ornate stained glass roof splashed the white stone floor of the chamber with a kaleidoscope of colour. Along the walls, statues carved with the virile savagery of the ancient race stood sentinel.

Petrillo began to move forward with small birdlike steps, the gun ready in his right hand. His eyes were fixed on the dais which dominated the far end of the chamber, and the statue which stood on it. This alone was not of the ubiquitous white stone, its whole body glistening and flashing with a million lights. It was the jewelled god of Ffarin which he had come halfway across the galaxy to steal.

The tapes had lied; it was even more beautiful than he had imagined. Beautiful to him only inasmuch as its value, even when broken up, would obviously be far in excess of the estimated ten million credits. The heady wine of success rose in him.

He was trembling now as he quickened his pace, eager to place his hands on the spoils of victory. Almost at the foot of the dais he froze, his eyes flickering as he heard the creak of an opening door to his left.

PETRILLO turned to face the newcomer, aware that this was the keeper of the jewelled god, the high priest of Ffarin. He was a small, wizened man of indeterminable age, but surely very old. He

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wore a drab-colored one-piece robe, fastened at the front with a clasp which bore a gleaming green star, encrusted with jewels.

"Greetings, Earthman." The high priest raised his gnarled right hand, which held a globe of crystal. A milky white, gaseous substance swirled in the interior of the sphere as it moved. "I have followed your progress with interest. I had hoped that the forces might have interceded on our behalf, but it seems that it is not the will of the god of Ffarin."

Petrillo's smile was a snarl of triumph. This old man would be no obstacle. "You know why I am here?"

The priest nodded sadly. "Yes, we guessed your purpose soon after you had landed. At first we thought you were one of the Agency patrols, but the death of the priest showed us that was not the truth."

"That was smart of you," said Petrillo.

"Can't I dissuade you from this terrible thing, my son?" asked the old man, solemnly. He lowered the crystal globe and looked down into its swirling whiteness, as if seeking some message of hope.

"You're wasting time," Petrillo said. "Why should I give up after coming so far?"

"But what of your own people? The Earth Extra Terrestrial Relations Agency promised us that we would not be molested. They will surely punish you..."

PETRILLO'S laugh echoed round the vaulted chamber like the shattering of a sheet of ice. "*If* they catch me. ETRA is too weak, its agents too thinly spread to enforce the rulings it has made. Protected planet—what by? That's just a lot of blarney to make you people give them trading concessions."

"That may be as you say, my son," said the old man. "We of Ffarin are not worldly. But what will become of you if you do this thing? You will never be able to return to Earth..."

"There are other worlds, like Ablon, where a man with money can get what he wants."

"And your soul?"

"The hell with my soul!" Petrillo was growing impatient.

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He looked up at the statue on the dais again. "I'm taking that thing with me. None of your talk will stop me."

The priest drew himself up proudly. "I am the guardian of the jewelled god. He shall not be taken from the temple whilst I live."

"And if I kill myself here and now?" Petrillo raised the gun.

"I do not think you truly would, my son. You covet the riches of the material world too greatly," said the old man. "But it is a chance which I may not take for the sake of my sacred trust."

"Then you have no alternative, have you?" Petrillo said confidently. "I shall take the statue anyway—but your soul will be in no danger if you die first. That is more important to you than a hundred statues."

"It means nothing that two Ffarin have already died because of you?" asked the old man. "I am sorry for you, my son."

"Save your pity and get it over with," snapped Petrillo. "Where is your ceremonial knife?"

"I carry no knife—the high priest has his own way of dying." The old man dashed the crystal sphere to the ground.

PETRILLO jumped backwards as the sphere shattered on the stone floor with a loud report. The milky smoke it contained diffused slowly into the sluggish air. Panic clutched at his throat—what sort of alien trick was this?

The old man stood, his hands calmly folded over the front of his drab robe, a smile of resignation on his face.

"What was in that sphere?" demanded Petrillo, brandishing the gun.

"The spores of a mold peculiar to our planet," replied the high priest. "It enters the human body through the nerve endings and makes its way quickly towards the brain. It is a convenient way of helping the soul onwards to its next stage of existence."

"But the spores..." said Petrillo, the beginnings of horror scratching at the roots of his sanity.

"Are now spread throughout the entire chamber," said the old man calmly. "Those that

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do not find a human host will die within a few minutes."

"But...*I* am human..."

The high priest smiled distantly. "I find that difficult to believe—but I am forced to admit it is the truth."

"And the spores will attack me?" Petrillo felt suddenly that his exposed flesh, his face, arms, neck and chest was tingling beneath the onslaught of a million tiny, unseen enemies. "No! I don't believe you! You would not risk your chance of after-life in this way. What if the spores should kill me before yourself?"

THE HIGH PRIEST shook his head. "No, my son. I am old—my nerve cells are already degenerating. The spores will act more quickly on me. I shall be the first to die, and the law will thus be satisfied."

Gibbering fear loomed in Petrillo's mind. Already he could detect a growing numbness in his limbs, the hand that held the gun no longer seemed to have any feeling. His sense of balance was slipping from him and he swayed where he stood, as stiff as any of the statues that looked impassively down on him. He had planned all these years only for this to happen at the last stage. A sob forced its way through his constricted throat.

The old man lowered himself slowly to the ground and sat cross legged in front of the dais. "Make your peace with whatever god you believe in, my son. I shall meditate on the wondrous ways of Ffarin and his works yet to come, after I have passed into his keeping."

Petrillo could feel fire now, coursing through his nerves, bringing with it death. As he stood there thinking, he was already a dead man.

Whimpering with rage and fear he forced himself to move. He staggered forward until he stood in front of the priest. The numb hand that was no longer his own levelled the gun at the old man's head. "There must be something, some way in which it can be stopped. Tell me!"

The high priest opened his heavy lidded eyes and looked at the gun, a sublime calmness diffused over his lined face. "Why threaten me, my son? I am beyond that now. Make

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your peace while there is still time."

The fire was a white hot pain, moving on through Petrillo's body, leaving behind it a dead numbness. His whole body was bathed in the sweat of defeat as he realized that he had been beaten.

No! Not quite... Even if he did not take the jewelled god, there still remained one way in which he could triumph over the priest. With a snarl of murderous hate he raised the gun to his own temple and fired.

THE OLD PRIEST watched calmly as Petrillo's lifeless body slumped to the floor. Then, shaking his head with a quiet sadness, he rose to his feet. Gathering his robe about him he walked back through the door from which he had come.

The small room behind the door was little more than a cell, with a bed and a chair; save for a beautifully worked tapestry on one wall. The priest walked over and unhooked one edge of the tapestry.

He bent over the sub etheric communicator thus revealed, adjusting its controls with practiced fingers.

"ETRA agent P567 speaking from Ffarin. Are you receiving me?... Petrillo arrived as predicted. I was unable to prevent the deaths of two Ffarin whom he encountered on his way here without revealing my hand. But I can promise that there will be no more trouble with him...

"No, that was not necessary. He killed himself, poor devil. Friend Petrillo was not a very strong character, I fear. And he *did* have an over-developed imagination—the smoke bomb quite unnerved him... No, I'm quite O.K. here, but you might remind the next patrol ship about that case of brandy I ordered—the local *eau de vie* is murder on the gut, and I'm not so young as I used to be.

"I must sign off now and go to the outer temple. The Ffarin will be coming soon to find out what has happened. I shall leave Petrillo's body in front of the dais for them to see. They will believe that, stricken with awe of the jewelled god, he took his own path to the next stage of existence...and

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I would be the last to disillusion them on that score.

"What's that?—cynic? No, you misunderstand me, Crane. They're a wonderful people, these Ffarin. *My* people now. Sometimes these days I get to thinking that they may be right about the whole thing. Although I hope not, for the good of *my own* soul. . ."

★

DOWN TO EARTH

THIS DEPARTMENT is for you, our readers, and is a vehicle for airing your opinions. We shall publish as many letters in each issue as space allows, and it makes no difference whether they are complimentary, or whether the editor is lambasted for what you think was an error of judgement in selecting stories. If you want to argue with an author, or with other letter-writers, here is an open forum for you.

While the editor may comment upon a given opinion, and may express one or two of his own at times, this is your department, and you have the last word. And whether your letter is published or not, rest assured that your opinions are read carefully and taken into consideration. All suggestions for improvement are welcome, and we will follow them wherever feasible.

UNCERTAINTY

Dear Sir:

I think that your Dec. issue was a pretty good one. "The Race Into Space" was especially praiseworthy. There were, however, I believe, a few flaws. The derivation of the rocket ship equation didn't take relativistic effects into considera-

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tion. "Crash Program" was great fun, but has a few unexplained details. "Yesterday's World of Tomorrow" wasn't too bad, but I would prefer a good story or science fact article. "Vector" wasn't too realistic, but it was lively, and it encouraged speculation while reading it. "Gift From the Stars" and "The New Science of Astronomy" are both rehashes of old, old themes. I wonder if Emsh ever stopped to think about the probability of the first two ships to land on the Moon within 500 miles of one another, even if it were planned that way.

One mathematical theorem that most mathematicians have ignored, and that I presume most s-f

[*Turn Page*]

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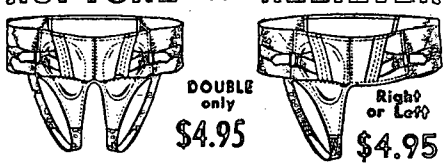

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fans have never heard of, despite its tremendous importance, is called Goedal's theorem. Kurt Goedel proved that if a consistent system includes arithmetic (this is true for all of our logical and mathematical systems) then the proof of the consistency of the system *can not be formulated within the system. This means that not only the validity, but even the consistency of all the methods we use in mathematics and science must be taken strictly on faith.* Goedel is no crackpot, he's a mathematician of international repute. Think about the importance of the theorem for a while. It means that we have no way of knowing whether we'll find our entire mathematical and scientific system

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crumbling at any moment. Russel's paradox (it's a real one, unlike Zeno's) indicates that our modern "set theory" is self contradictory, and indeed many mathematicians have already stopped using set theory and its results. *It may only be a matter of time until similar flaws are found in the rest of mathematics.* As for science, we haven't worked out one uncontradicted theory. Perhaps some Simak-like writers who consider humans to be only gifted gadgeteers are right.

Here's hoping for for a solution.

JEFFREY M. SPEISER
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[*Turn Page*]

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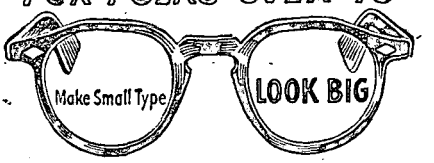

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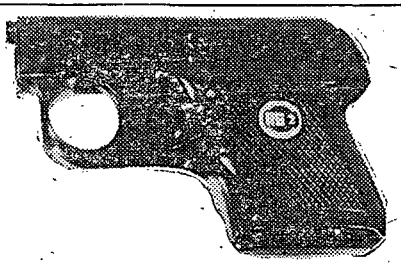

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Russel's paradox, etc., underlines Canon Streeter's notations on "Natural Law", when he says, that the "...Laws of Nature, unlike those of man, are not prescriptive but descriptive; they represent not something Nature has laid down as a command, but the best description man can give of the way in which things do as a matter of fact occur. They are generalizations from observations made by man."

I quote this because it is a clear expression of what I've been trying to say for some time, not as an appeal to the "authority" of Canon Streeter. (St. Thomas Acquinas states that the argument from authority is the weakest of all.)

We hear a great deal about the Laws of the Universe these days—apparently Natural Law has been retired and a more formidable

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spectre evoked to take its place—but the same difficulty holds. We can't (as yet) know what any of the "Laws of the Universe" are through use of the "scientific method" because (a) our data is far too limited (b) the scientific method, while useful within its limitations, is far too restricted.

However (because at this point the Forteans, and others like them, move in and say we can't know anything at all—and all scientific generalizations are equally

Your comment on Russel's paradox, etc., underlines Can- absurd and false) the sort of descriptions we do give, from time to time have been, are, and can continue to be useful—so long as we aren't victimized by our own cleverness to the point where we believe we've discovered absolutely true and unshakeable "natural laws". A generalization, theory, hypothesis—which is all we've ever had in these matters—can be considered acceptable so long as it's useful; when someone comes up with another theory, etc., which covers as much ground as the one currently in vogue, or covers it better, or, in addition covers ground the current theory couldn't, then it's time for a change.

The history of scientific thought, etc., shows that it's been rough on just about every generation in the last few centuries, as each had to see parts of their most treasured verities of natural law overthrown. Who can blame the chemists who obtained their degrees just before the periodic table was revised for feeling outraged, and maybe a little persecuted?

IN FAVOR

Dear Mr. Lowndes:

I don't know what it is with your covers. When I get the last few issues out and compare them, they don't really look so much alike—but when I see a *Future* or SFS on the newsstand, I always have to check the contents page to make sure that it's really a new issue. (If many people have to do this, it could be cutting into your sales.)

Three cheers on getting Finlay! Now if you can just keep him...

What goes with the novelet, though? "Crash Program" read like the first half of a novel—with the second half being summarized in that last quarter-page section. It's as though the author got tired of

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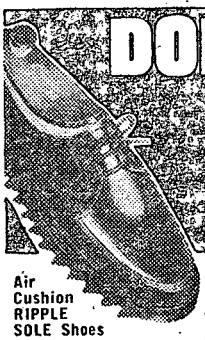

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writing the thing halfway through; he takes considerable pains to build up a conflict between the "bad" supers and the combination of "good" supers and normal mankind, and then he just quits. It's as though van Vogt had stopped writing "Slan" after chapter 11, merely tacking on a rider to the effect that the plans worked and everyone lived happily ever after. Even if Wesley is planning a sequel, the first story should be rounded off better than that.

Ratings: First, "Gift From The Stars"—very good. Second, "The New Science of Astronomy"—cute, and with little competition in this issue. Third, "Crash Program"—good except for the lack of an ending. Fourth, "Vector"—an end-

[*Turn To Page* 128]

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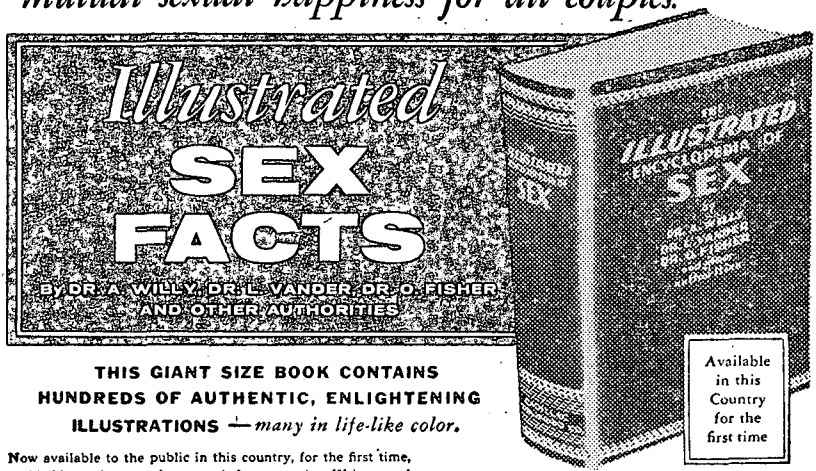

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ing that doesn't solve a damned thing, and a pretty confused beginning and middle. Give it an X, too. Article —good. Less "written down" than most. I'm in favor of keeping the editorials on "Yesterday's World Of Tomorrow" until you feel that there is nothing further to be gained by continuing it. I will say, however, that the series becomes less interesting the further it goes on. From the first couple, which I thought were superb, the quality has gone down until I now consider them good; and I suppose that after a while I'll get fed up with the series. (Actually, I shouldn't say that the quality has gone down, because I doubt that it has—but my interest in the series *has* gone down. . . considerably.)

As to Bingham's letter I'm all in favor of "snap" endings, especially in short stories. Few writers can develop a short story properly with anything but a "snap ending"—and even fewer of these are writing stf. But I agree that the "kickers" have been overdone—it isn't necessary to put a snap ending on *every* story. Likewise, few authors can delineate an

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"active" hero (as opposed to Bingham's "passive" ones) without making him completely unbelievable and ridiculous. That shouldn't stop them from trying, occasionally. But if I have a choice, I'll take a believable schmoe in preference to Richard Seaton or Jommy Cross—those active, hard-charging supermen who in their off moments were too stupid to tie their own shoelaces. The ideal, of course, is the believeable superman (or if not a superman, at least a hero a bit larger than life), and if you get one I'll applaud you. But it's a rare occurrence.

ROBERT COULSON,
105 Stitt Street,
Wabash, Indiana

At the moment of this writing, the returns show about 2 to 1 in favor of continuing the "Yesterday's World of Tomorrow" editor-

[*Turn Page*]

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ials; however, the outstate, upstate, and instate returns aren't all in.

At least one reader who voted in favor of the series urged me to beware of falling into a set pattern with it—and that strikes me as good advice. Once something like this gets going, that can happen far too easily—and often without the writer's realizing that it has happened. You set up a system for doing the job—then suddenly find that you've just been filling in blanks on a form.

Any suggestions for various angles of approach to the basic purpose of this series, then, will be welcomed—as I cudgel my grey cells on the same problem. The basic purpose, for those who came in late is to (a) report briefly on just what magazine science fiction was like thirty years ago—what sort of stories were run, what sort of ideas and gimmicks arose for the first time then—and (b) offer a bit of interpretation and evaluation of the ideas and the traditions inaugurated rather than just comment on stories which make good reading today. What were the attitudes toward science fiction and visualizations of tomorrow in 1929, as compared with attitudes and visualizations of the future in 1959?

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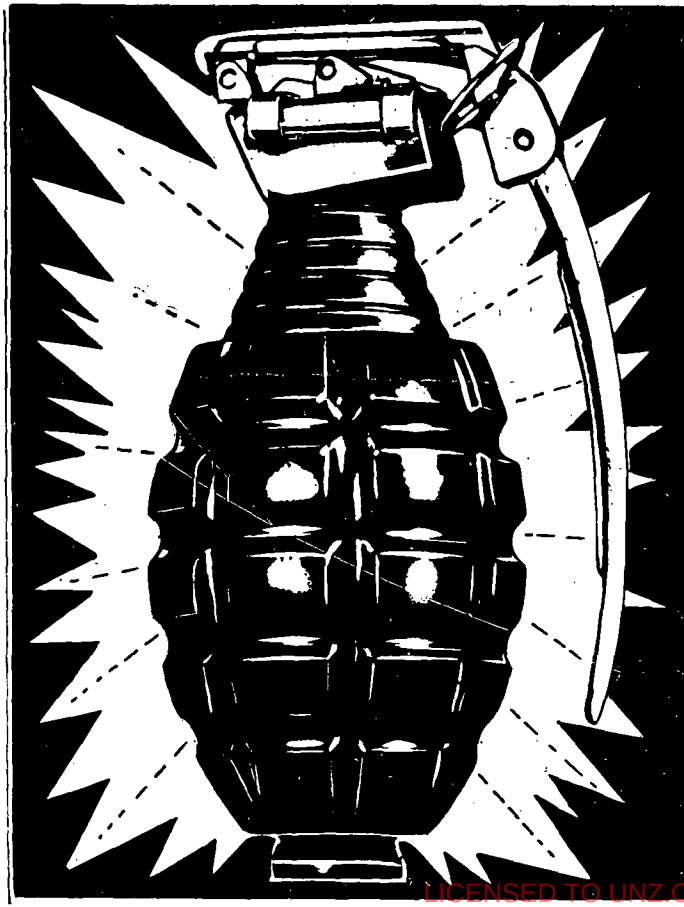

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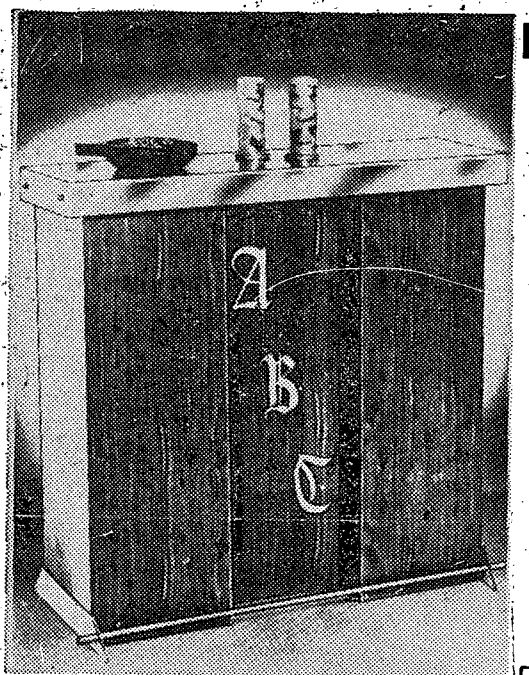

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Order today! If not delighted return for refund. Because of its large size we are forced to ask for 63¢ shipping charges.

FEATURES

- Personalized With Your Initials
- It's Portable—Sets Up Indoors Or Out
- Built-in Shelf Holds Full Party Supplies
- Stain Resistant Bar Top

It's Big—39" wide, 38" high, 13" deep

Sturdily built of aluminum laminated and wood grain finished Multi Flute Fibreboard, this handsome personalized Home Bar is resistant to alcohol and soda stains. Handy built-in shelf holds full supply of bottles, glasses and napkins. Full size bar top holds drinks, pretzels, chips, etc. Sets up in a jiffy and folds compact for easy storage. A beauty for your home, and a novel gift. State initials desired with each order.

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

S. J. Wegman Co., Dept. RB-90
LYNBROOK, NEW YORK

Rush my new personalized portable Home Bar at once! If I am not delighted I may return it after ten days Free Trial for prompt refund of full purchase price.

☐ Send C.O.D. I will pay postman on delivery plus C.O.D. shipping charges.

☐ I enclose $5.98 plus shipping charges.

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ADDRESS.....

MY INITIALS ARE.....

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